Valley Voice

Volume XXXIV No. 20 • 16 October, 2014 www.ourvalleyvoice.com

Trustee Candidates Meet in Polite Forum

Steve Pastis

The College of Sequoias Adjunct Faculty Association hosted a forum at Brandman University in Visalia on October 7 for the two candidates on the November ballot for Ward 1 of the COS Board of Trustees. Incumbent Greg Sherman and challenger Laurel Barton, a former Visalia City Council member, participated in a forum that showed little disagreement on any of the issues discussed.

COS Board of Trustees Ward 1 Candidates Laurel Barton and Greg Sherman answer questions at the October 7 forum.

Moderator Stephen Tootle, a history instructor at COS, read questions from some of the more than 30 people in attendance, often tailoring questions to allow both candidates a chance to respond.

"This is a time to look at how we offer education," said Barton in her opening remarks, stressing the need for board members to know COS students and what their needs are. "It's important that we help our students get through quickly."

Sherman noted that he has served on the board for two terms and this was his first contested election. "It's been kind of fun," he said. "I've had to do the things I didn't have to do the first two times."

He talked about why he is seeking a third term. "The students are the reason I'm on the board of trustees," he said. He then noted that during his eight years he also served terms as president of the COS Foundation,

TRUSTEES continued on **9 »**

Visalia Continues Process to Adopt General Plan Update

Catherine Doe

A continuance of the September 8 special Visalia City Council meeting on the General Plan took place during the council's regular meeting on October 6. Due to an emergency, Council Member Bob Link was unable to attend. Any decision on the General Plan was delayed until the following week, when Link would be available. According to Josh McDonald, Visalia city planner, the entire council should be in attendance during such an important vote. A vote like this only happens around every 20 years and Link is the chairman of the council's General Plan Update Committee (GPURG).

Despite Link's absence, the public hearing part of the General Plan adoption process did continue as expected. It's doubtful that few, if any, of the 12 items listed on the agenda to consider before adoption would have been voted on even if Link were present. After a 90-minute public hearing, the council and attendees were ready to call it a night. At the end of the meeting, Mayor Steve Nelsen formally closed the public hearing portion of the General Plan Update. No public comment will be heard during the next special meeting on October 13.

Because this was a public hearing, and those who approached the lectern were either experts in their field or an integral part of the GPU process, the three-minute time limit was not enforced. A few of the 13 speakers talked about their own neighborhoods or clients, but the majority of the discussion revolved around the pros and cons of adopting an Ag Mitigation Program (AMP). Both sides made compelling arguments.

Brent Taylor, a local realtor and member of the Visalia Planning Commission, was concerned about developers having to pay increased fees. Developer fees would be a major funding source in buying farmland to put into a conservancy. He pointed out that one of the most attractive elements of Visalia was the affordable housing. But increasing the developer fees would translate into higher housing costs for the consumer. He said that the General Plan Update already has several farmland protections built in it, such as very stringent growth tiers and higher density requirements of residential developments. Taylor explained that this new "tax" would siphon hundreds of millions of dollars out of the locals' pockets.

Brad Maaske, also a Visalia realtor, said that the GPU, for reasons explained by Taylor, is a self-mitigating plan. Even so, he said that the Sequoia Riverlands Trust (SRT) wants a gift, acre for acre, to put into an agriculture conservative easement. "Everyone wants a buffer between Visalia and Tulare but handing the property over to a third party and losing control was not the way to do it," said Maaske. "There are lawsuits all over the United States involving AMPs." He was concerned that once farmland was put into a conservancy that farmers could not rent rooms out of their houses, change their crops or operate a fruit stand to sell their produce.

Brian Blain, a member of GPURG and representing the Tulare County Farm Bureau (TCFB), had the most measured comments. Though the TCFB is against Visalia adopting their own AMP, he dispelled a few rumors floating around about the mitigation program. Participation is completely voluntary. No one has to put their property into an ag conservation trust. Nor is the farmer told that they cannot rent a room, change crops or build a fruit stand. What is

GENERAL PLAN continued on **6 »**

Protesters assemble across from the Porterville City Council chambers.

Porterville Council Faces Another Proclamation Controversy

Tony Maldonado

The Porterville City Council found itself embroiled in another proclamation-related controversy when LGBT rights advocates protested in front of City Hall during its Oct. 7 meeting.

Coming Out Proclamation Shot Down

The protest was aimed at the council's new proclamation rules and the failure of a recently-submitted request for a Coming Out Day proclamation to find any sponsors.

The new rules, passed after displeasure with the way last June's LGBT proclamation was handled and issued, require a councilmember to 'sponsor' any submitted proclamations, then bring the matter to a vote. Because no one sponsored the proclamation, the council was not able to even to vote on it.

Numerous LGBT advocates spoke during the meeting's opening public comment session, sharing their experiences coming out and why they felt a proclamation was not only important, but overdue.

The text of the submitted proclamation read, in part:

WHEREAS: There are numerous clubs, non-profits, and other organizations in Porterville, California, that work toward helping members of the LGBTQ+ community find the strength to come out, as well as cope with negative attitudes and stigmas surrounding the process. Some of these organizations include Gay Porterville,

PORTERVILLE continued on **9 »**

Tulare County Welcomes New California Film and Television Tax Credits

Steve Pastis

Last month, Governor Jerry Brown went all the way to Hollywood to sign AB 1839, by Assembly Members Mike Gatto (D-Los Angeles) and Raul J. Bocanegra (D-Los Angeles). The new legislation, which passed with bipartisan support, triples funding for the state's Film and Television Tax Credit Program. Funding for the new program will be $230 million in fiscal year 2015-16, and $330 million for each of the following four fiscal years.

Locals Lily Fierros and Bailey Gibson appeared in the video of "SoundWave" by R3hab & Trevor Guthrie. (The colors used were cleaned up to accommodate a nature program filming the next day.)

"I am pleased that Governor Brown signed this important legislation that will make California more competitive with other states and other countries for film and television production," said Assembly Republican Leader Connie Conway (R-Tulare). "More productions being filmed in California mean more jobs being created, more economic activity being generated and more tax revenue coming into the state. This bipartisan legislation is an example of what is possible when Republicans and Democrats work together to do what's best for our state and our economy."

"Over the last 20 years, our California has lost much of its film and television production work, and with it the solid technical and creative jobs that our industry provides," said Warner Bros. Pictures President of Worldwide Physical Production Steve Papazian. "(AB 1839) is a catalyst to grow those positions for the thousands of current and future crew members who want to work here and for the myriad small businesses that supply and support our industry every day."

When other states, such as New

FILMING continued on **8 »**

Nothing is more important than your family's health. Our comprehensive care helps every member of your family through every stage of life.

Call us today to schedule an appointment or visit us online.

Family HealthCare Network
a californiahealth+ center
Your Health. Our Mission.
877.960.3426 | fhcn.org

Accredited By The Joint Commission
NCQA Recognized Practice

FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

This, Our Otherwise Neanderthal Masculine Life

As you read this, my wife and our youngest will have been in Oregon for nearly a week, visiting our oldest and our older daughter. It's our sophomore daughter's fall break, and she has been impatient to return. They flew up there last year, but my brief October bachelorhood was immediately scotched by one of those maladies of uncertain origin that at first engender a desire for death but, after three or four shaky days, leave the survivor in a bizarre malaise. I was barely able to shave off my beard; the remainder of that interlude, not surprisingly, I scarcely remember. My wife and daughter did not recognize me at the airport when I went to pick them up. They walked right past me. I do faintly recall watching some important baseball games--but I can't remember the teams and, anyhow, I digress. We did put a paper out, chiefly attributable to Steve and Tony, as I was useless. I was also alone. Not so, this time: I have been marooned in this besieged house with our two other sons, aged 26 and 20. Except for the fact that I'm old now and creaky--and their father--it has been rather like journeying back to my college days, when I lived with housemates. But here's a list of things, at least so far, that have not occurred.

First, though, let us agree to never underestimate the civilizing influence of women in this, our otherwise Neanderthal masculine life.

So far, no one has decided that a raccoon--dead on the roadside for days yet somehow miraculously still intact--would make for an excellent adventure in home taxidermy. No carcass, therefore, has been dragged by its tail into the living room, eviscerated, de-boned and un-sinewed, then tacked to dry fur-side down on a plywood board and left, the whole week, reeking on the floor there. It follows, then, that no pervasive stench--apart, that is, from such that three men naturally create--has enveloped the household in a foul, almost palpable cloud.

No dead mouse has been discovered improbably entombed in the mini skyline of precariously stacked (but well-encrusted) dishes on the kitchen counters. In fact, the dishes have not been neglected at all; they have been regularly washed, and the sink has remained cheerfully clear. So nobody has had to resort--in an heroic attempt, finally and all at once let's say--to bathing while simultaneously washing what might have amounted to every dish, pot and pan in the house. This means that the upstairs shower bath drain has not been catastrophically clogged.

It has not been taken into anyone's head that insects make for marvelous target practice with a BB gun, whether on a wall, the ceiling, or in flight. Gone unperfected, then, has been the art of deflection shooting. A fly-swatter has sufficed.

Similarly, no deer has been illegally shot across anyone's fence line. No deer has been shot at all. So far as I know, they're out of season. Anyhow, you can't really shoot one with a BB gun--so nobody has skulked home expecting the police to appear any minute at the front door.

Speaking of the police, nobody has called them with any complaint against us whatsoever. This means, of course, that the music has not been loud enough.

But the college football gods have. It's past mere capriciousness at this point; they have remained, I still contend, actively unkind. No juju practiced by mankind can placate them, but--as a finger in their eye, so to speak--no street sign has had hands laid upon it and been furiously uprooted to protest the gods' injustice.

House justice, too, has gone uninvoked. There has been no call, say, to fill an old album cover with shaving cream, as opposed to gel, and--after having stealthily placed it open-ended against the bottom of a closed door--to then leap upon the small pressure-equalizing board that has carefully been put on top. Nobody's entire bedroom, therefore, has been converted into a sloppy, October snow globe. No--we've been too sobersided a crowd to have gone in for that kind of idiocy.

No all-nighters fueled by drink have been pulled in the writing of any lengthy research paper, although I have--obviously--penned this missive. Moreover, booze in quantities sufficient to float a battleship have not been consumed, nor have any new cocktails been invented. No keg of beer has been in evidence; but a modicum of chardonnay has, indeed, been downed--in proper wine glasses, no less. Thus my home streak of never using a coaster has been protected.

Food has been irrelevant. No floor or toilet seat has been buttered. Bread has been. Top Ramen has remained banned, along with most canned goods, and no one has really cared what time dinner has been served, or even what it was. Just that it was. "Men," women are fond of saying, "are dogs."

Alas, no women have illuminated the premises with their pulchritude and wit. Indeed, no one of that persuasion--the female--has so much as alighted from her car to ask for directions, as they so often say they are wont to do. I have, then, given no strange woman directions; certainly, I have not this week persuaded a strange woman of anything. Now that I think of it, though--about women--maybe I always have.

— Joseph Oldenbourg

THE VALLEY VOICE IS YOUR NEWSPAPER

Published by The Valley Voice, LLC.

Publisher/Editor: Joseph Oldenbourg
joseph@ourvalleyvoice.com

Associate Editor/Sales: Steve Pastis (steve@ourvalleyvoice.com)

Staff:
Catherine Doe, writer (catherine@ourvalleyvoice.com)
Tony Maldonado, webmaster (tony@ourvalleyvoice.com)
April Heath Pastis, writer (april@ourvalleyvoice.com)
Louie Luna, sales (louie@ourvalleyvoice.com)
Nancy Vigran, sales (nancy@ourvalleyvoice.com)

Contact us & share your opinion
www.ourvalleyvoice.com
208 W. Main St., Ste. E • Visalia, CA 93291

Political Fix

Catherine Doe

The Thrill Is Gone

This is the last issue before the November election, but no predictions will be made. Trying to predict who would come in second during the June Primary was fun. Of my 14 predictions, 12 were correct--pretty good for a novice prognosticator. But the fun is gone, and it's pretty obvious who will win in the general election in November. There are a lot of candidate forums and nitpicking, but it's all for naught. Incumbents and heirs apparent are going to win.

There are two so called "competitive" races on the Tulare County ballot: Congressional District 21 and State Senate District 14. They cover all of Kings County but only a small part of Tulare County. These races are competitive despite the fact that both districts have a large majority of registered Democrats and are a majority Hispanic. Yet both Caucasian Republican incumbents are going to beat their Democrat Hispanic challengers.

The only other race that might be considered up for grabs is Tulare County Supervisor District 5. Virginia Gurrola, Porterville City Council member and former mayor, is challenging incumbent Supervisor Mike Ennis. Sup. Ennis was elected in November of 2006, so you would think he was a shoe-in. But as far as the election is concerned, he has been MIA. Sup. Ennis gives a lot of input during board meetings when it concerns his district, but he won't go to candidates' forums, rarely returns phone calls, and rarely talks to the press--all the while insisting that he does.

Incumbents who feel secure in their races many times opt not to participate in forums because, as one political pundit put it, "Why take the chance to say something stupid and then blow it, a la Todd Akin?" This characterizes Sup. Ennis, but contrasts greatly from the exceedingly gracious and elegant State Senator Jean Fuller. This is a candidate, running for the 16th District State Senate seat, who would win even if she dropped dead tomorrow. Yet she shows up at forums to debate her well-intentioned, but inarticulate and scattered challenger, Ruth Musser-Lopez. During the candidates' forum at the convention center September 16, Ms. Fuller listened intently as her opponent gave her opening statement; she applauded, and then gave her words of encouragement. She didn't even return the jabs thrown her way.

I have to give an honorable mention to State Assembly candidate Rudy Mendoza. Though I tend to forget, he is not an incumbent. But he won the primary by a landslide against six other contenders. As he puts it, "I'm out meeting the people and holding events. I take no voter for granted." Even with his lopsided victory in June and the endorsement of every elected Republican in the Valley, he has attended every forum, giving 100%.

Concerning statewide elections, Democrats will sweep them as they did in 2010. The only interesting tidbit is that Republican State Controller candidate Ashley Swearengin, who came in first in the June primary, is almost certain to lose in the general election. No Republican has won a statewide office since Steve Poizner, for Insurance Commissioner, in 2006.

For the Birds

During the first week of October, President Obama made the statement, "Most of our Democrat voters aren't aware there's even an election on November 4."

Is this true in Tulare and Kings County?

I thought I would check it out for myself, but include all voters, not just Democrats. During my professional life I've had several careers, although my favorite was survey research. I researched birth defects, alcohol and drug use among teens and adults, and loved the 2000 census. But political surveys are my favorite.

I started my survey at one of the best meeting and shopping locales around, the Cosmic Corral in Hanford, which is ironic because no one who frequents the store is interested in watching or reading the news. I dutifully bring a small stack of *Valley Voice*s in twice a month, which is greeted by a high-pitched squeal of glee from their 18-year old store clerk. She immediately puts my paper by their bird cage because the *Valley Voice* happens to have the perfect dimensions to be liners. I even wrote a three-part series on mediums that revolved around the Cosmic Corral. And whereas the owners of the store did manage to read at least one of my stories, I am fairly certain that the birds saw all three.

After breaking every survey research protocol on bias and consistency, I was pleasantly surprised with the results. Not only do the shoppers at the Cosmic Corral know the names of their five chakras but, contrary to what President Obama thinks, they also knew there was an election November 4. What was humorous, though, was that even though you could throw a rock to Rep. David Valadao's regional office from the store, they did not know who their representative is.

After surveying other locations in Visalia, the final results were: 65% of the respondents knew there was an election, but only 31% knew who their representative was, or for whom they would be voting. I was pretty impressed with our counties because by the time the election rolls around they will have figured out for whom to vote, and those that don't figure it out, probably won't vote. That will still put Tulare County's participation in the election way above average for California.

Don't Read This Section if You Want to Understand the Propositions

The *Visalia Times-Delta* has said it is committed to educating its readers about the six propositions on the November ballot, so I recommend that you read that paper for more thorough information. But I can't vouch for the *Visalia Times-Delta*'s impartiality after their handling of the Kaelble/Ward contest for Tulare County District Attorney--i.e. 5:1 editorials in favor of Mr. Kaelble, some of them even printed twice.

The propositions bore me, so I tend to just flip through the text and look at who wrote the arguments for and against. Then I fill out my sample ballot, because by the time I get to my polling place I have already forgotten how I wanted to vote.

So for those who want not only an uninformed, but probably biased recommendation on how to vote on the propositions, please keep reading.

Proposition 1 – The Water Bond

Due to the severe drought, Proposition 1 will sail to victory, which is ironic because it doesn't add a drop of water to California. Yes there is $2.7 billion set aside for storage - but it has to rain first. Let's say it does start raining again in California and the Temperance Dam is built. When the next severe drought hits California what do you think will happen to those 1,000 residents whose wells went dry in East Porterville? They will go dry again. People whose wells have dried up won't get a drop from Temperance Dam. That water will have to go to the San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors if they don't get their CVP water.

This bond measure has the support of Democrats, Republicans, Farmers and Environmentalists. It does not, however, have the support of Political Fix's favorite punching bag, Assembly Member Tim Donnelly. My vote? Yes.

Proposition 2 – Rainy Day Fund

Propositions 1 and 2 are what is referred to as "legislative" propositions because they were put on the ballot by the legislature. Propositions 45, 46 and 47 have been placed on the ballot by people who collected enough signatures. These are called "initiatives." Proposition 48 is a "referendum" which asks voters to decide on a law that is already in place.

I managed to get through 52 years of my life without this information, but for the next 30 seconds you find it mildly useful.

Because Propositions 1 and 2 were passed by the state assembly and senate, and signed by the Governor, their passage in November will be a huge victory for Gov. Jerry Brown. These are the centerpieces of an otherwise lackluster campaign and will brand him as not just interested in being reelected, but focused on the needs of California.

Proposition 2 would strengthen the current rainy day fund while also requiring the state to pay down more of its debts and unfunded liabilities. That pretty much seals it for me so my recommendation is a Yes.

The only downside of Proposition 2 is that it limits the amount schools can keep in their own rainy day fund. If the state sets aside money for schools, then schools have to spend their reserves on such things as teacher salaries. Schools may only be allowed to keep a few weeks reserve. The legislature is contemplating fixing this flaw if the proposition passes.

Proposition 45 – Health Care Insurance. Rate Changes

According to the League of Women Voters' Pro and Con sheet, "Prop 45 applies only to individual and employer small-group plans. The Insurance Commissioner would have to approve rate changes for those plans before they could be implemented. Rates in effect as far back as November 2012 would be subject to refund if found to be excessive."

My "catastrophic" health insurance rates go up annually. Yet even with insurance I haven't been able to afford to see a personal doctor in 35 years. I'd say, that is paying a lot of money for nothing. Opponents say that the potential conflicts between Proposition 45 and Covered California are too great to ignore, but Covered California doesn't help the middle class and hasn't gotten me any closer to seeing a doctor.

Supporters say that, "Prop 45 will control health insurance costs just as Prop 103 controlled auto insurance costs." Need we say more? My vote is Yes.

Proposition 46 – Drug and Alcohol Testing of Doctors. Medical Negligence Lawsuits

This proposition does three things: 1) mandates drug testing for doctors; 2) requires doctors to check a national data base before prescribing medication, and 3) raises the pain and suffering cap of malpractice suits to $1.1 million.

This is the toughest proposition to nail down, and I may just wimp out and skip it on my ballot. Supporters say that raising the cap will hold doctors more accountable when they make mistakes and will prevent "doctor shopping" by those who abuse prescription medication. OK, that makes sense. But I don't know how effective it is to drug test doctors. Many people function much better after a good stiff drink or a few Xanax, and doctors are no exception. My recommendation – Flip a coin.

Proposition 47 – Criminal Sentences. Misdemeanor Penalties.

This proposition reduces the penalty for certain nonviolent felonies to misdemeanors. Any convicted felon whose crime is reclassified as a misdemeanor could get resentenced. State savings from this proposition would go to the "Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Fund" that is designed to keep individuals out of prison. Detractors say that the resentencing would jam the courts and that the proposition will release thousands of violent criminals.

Now would be a good time to highlight a few facts. The United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world. Yes, we beat Iran, China and North Korea. The U.S. prison population is more than 2.4 million. That means more than one out of every 100 American adults is behind bars.

Maybe this country needs a paradigm change and that change should start in California. Vote Yes.

Proposition 48 – Indian Gaming Agreements

I really hate the idea of my vote being bought. So when I read that the North Fork Rancheria wanted to build a casino off of their reservation, right on Highway 99 just north of Madera, I was expecting them to throw millions of dollars at me to get my vote.

But the opposite is true. The campaign to defeat this referendum is backed by two rival tribes, the Table Mountain Rancheria and the Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Gold Resort and Casino. They spent $2.4 million just to get the referendum on the ballot to block construction of the North Fork casino. They say that "we made a promise" to not build off-site when proposition 1A was passed in 2000 legalizing gambling on reservations. But you wouldn't know it looking at all of the casinos cropping up between Bakersfield and Madera. There are five casinos with three more on the way. That's one slot machine for every 352 residents, which will double when the new casinos are built. After Nevada, California has the largest share of the gambling market in the country.

My recommendation: If you don't like being bought, vote Yes, because the opposition has all of the money. If you don't want another Central Valley casino, vote No.

I plagiarized most of this information from the League of Women Voters' guide, so if you want to actually hear it in person, you can attend their presentation and discussion on the Ballot Measures. The presentation is Tuesday, October 21 at 11:45am in Sue Sa's Club House, 699 W. Center, Visalia. It is a fixed price luncheon for $13. No reservations are needed but for information call 734-6501.

Gurrola Campaign Goes Grassroots

Staff Reports

Virginia Gurrola was confident and charged up after receiving the news back in June that her campaign will be moving forward against incumbent Mike Ennis for 5th District representative on the Tulare County Board of Supervisors. To win in November she knew in June that she needed to "up her game" to deal with this Goliath of an incumbent. She turned to her husband and campaign manager, Sal Gurrola, and together began working in constructing an effort that would deliver a victory.

Sal's mission was simple. Build a campaign that people can embrace and be heard and represented via their participation in the democratic process; a learning experience and environment that can be successful against a non-engaging yet well-financed incumbent.

The campaign quickly blossomed like no other grassroots campaign in recent history in Porterville. Former students have come by to sign up with the campaign as well as many from her professional career at the college. Under Sal's direction, the campaign opened an office in Downtown Porterville, a block away from City Hall, put up billboards, and assembled a team of local advisers providing expertise in local politics, media, community relations and general grassroots campaigning.

This is a completely different campaign from the primary election effort where meetings were held at a local pizzeria in Porterville with supporters and friends and headquarters was basically the kitchen table at the Gurrola home. The core of the Gurrola campaign is still filled with volunteers who want change, a voice and positive effects for the district that is usually under the shadow of the Visalia/Tulare area.

"What Sal and Virginia Gurrola have accomplished with this campaign is in itself a victory. It is a classroom for what a grassroots campaign should do. If you are going against a longtime incumbent you have to pull out all the stops. This also demonstrates how Virginia works with others to tackle an issue: observation, discussion, plan of action, focus and implementation," said Ruben Macareno, one of the advisers on the Gurrola team.

Macareno said not many grassroots campaigns are as organized as this campaign is turning out to be. But then again he says Sal, the architect of the campaign, had previously run Virginia's three successful city council campaigns and her one-time bid for the state assembly. "He knows what he is doing. His experience from throughout the years has guided them to where they need to go to find substantial grassroots support, to build the machine that would overcome the influence of incumbency and a well-financed opposition,' said Macareno.

Virginia Gurrola

The campaign is hopeful that the elements put into this effort including the large billboards towering over Highway 65 and any array of local campaign activities will be enough. But the real source of eventual success lies within the candidate and Sal, supporters and volunteers know this.

Virginia's 37 years mentoring and helping students at Porterville College has benefited the campaign. Her years on the council have been a plus as well. Many of her key staffers are from relationships built from throughout the years. Even NFL player James Sanders, a former student of Virginia's, came out to a fundraiser and auctioned away some of his items in support of the campaign.

"The Gurrola campaign is truly a grassroots effort. Everyone working for Virginia are long time supporters and friends," said Macareno. "It is inspiring to me to hear her campaign workers talk about how Virginia was there for them. How she fought for them and now it times for them to fight for themselves with Virginia leading the way.

Election day is Tuesday, November 4.

TCAG Hosts Successful Fall Policy Conference

Staff Reports

On October 1-3, the Tulare County Association of Governments (TCAG) hosted the 10th Annual Fall Policy Conference at the Visalia Convention Center.

Nearly 175 public officials, transportation experts, planners, engineers, consultants and students descended on the convention center for two days of the latest and greatest ideas in the field of transportation and planning, networking and discussions with California's leading experts in the field. It was an opportunity for the Valley to showcase its recent successes to the California State Transportation Agency, the California Transportation Commission and the California Department of Transportation, who were all there, providing keynote speakers.

Tulare County Supervisor Phil Cox addresses the conference.

The conference included a mix of organizations that came together to provide a balanced conference program on many issues that affect Central California. Among these organizations were the American Planning Association, American Society of Civil Engineers, the San Joaquin Fall Policy Council, the Self Help Counties Coalition, the California Alliance for Jobs, the Latino Water Coalition, the California/Nevada Cement Association and several colleges and universities, including College of the Sequoias, Fresno State and UC Davis, along with their allied associations.

Numerous consulting firms contributed to the program, as well as provided sponsorships that made the event possible. Quad Knopf hosted an opening reception at the McDermont Field House in Lindsay, and tours were provided to areas that significantly affect today's transportation system.

The Merced County Association of Governments will host the conference next fall.

Study Finds California Businesses Face 19% Higher Operating Costs

Staff Reports

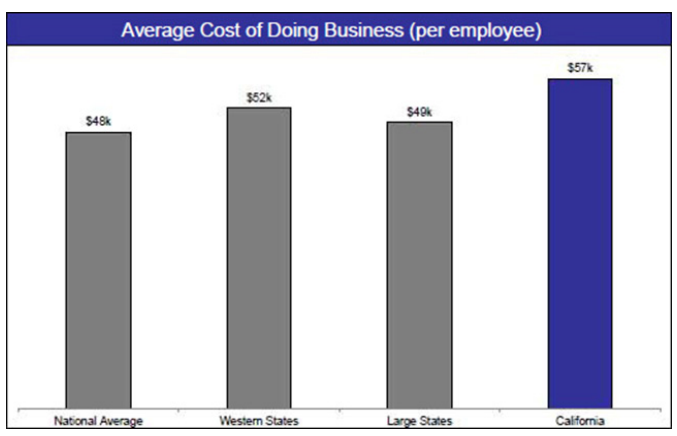
California businesses on average have 19% higher operating costs per job than businesses in the rest of the country, according to "The Cost of Doing Business in California," a study released by the California Foundation for Commerce and Education (CFCE) and prepared by Andrew Chang & Company, LLC.

Business operating costs in California are on average 16% higher than for firms in large industrial states, and are 10% higher than the average of Western states.

California's per-job costs are higher than every other Western state, and most other large states. The high cost of creating additional jobs puts California at a substantial competitive disadvantage when attempting to retain or attract businesses that have a choice where to locate.

Among all states, California's cost of doing business ranked 46th, based on cost per job. The state ranked 43rd on a cost-per-firm basis. (These relative rankings differ because California has a greater number of smaller firms with fewer employees than do most other states, which slightly dilutes the cost-per-firm ranking.)

"The main reason that operating costs are higher in California than in other states are the differences in labor costs," said Loren Kaye, president of CFCE. "These costs include wages, unemployment insurance, workers compensation and the regulatory and litigation costs that are embedded in an employer's payroll expense. While some of the difference is due to the state's higher cost-of-living, public policy and regulatory mandates account for a substantial portion of the difference."

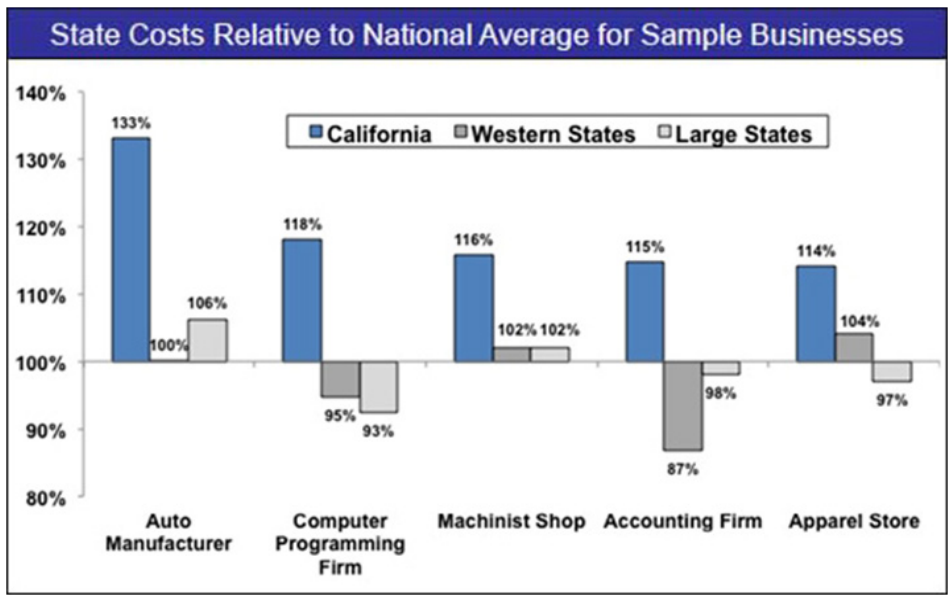


California businesses pay about 15% more in labor costs than the national average. Employers here pay higher labor costs than every Western state and most large states. Average wages and workers compensation costs are substantially above national and regional norms, while unemployment insurance costs are less.

California has the third-highest minimum wage of any state, and is one of only three states that require paying overtime after an eight-hour day, instead of the federal standard 40-hour week. The state has one of the friendliest workplace litigation climates, including a private right of action for many labor laws.

California is also less competitive on measures of business taxes (22% higher than national average) and legal costs (15% higher than national average), measured on the job base.

Energy costs are a mixed bag in California. Our rates for electricity and transportation fuels are much higher than the national average, which has discouraged energy-intensive industries from locating here. But those same high costs also create strong incentives for energy efficiency, which has kept operating costs for energy for California businesses at or below the national average. The bottom line for competitiveness, though, is that for energy-intensive industries, high incremental costs mean more expense to locate or expand in California.



California's national competitiveness on costs varies depending on the type of business. CFCE looked at costs for five sample businesses and found these indicators of competitiveness:

- An automobile manufacturer's operating costs are 33% higher than the national average. The main drivers for this cost difference are substantially higher wages for skilled employees and higher electricity costs for an energy-intensive process.
- A computer-programming firm's operating costs are 18% higher than the national average. The main driver for this cost difference is higher wages for highly skilled employees.
- A machinist shop's operating costs are 16% higher than the national average. The main drivers for this cost difference are higher wages and higher electricity costs.
- An accounting firm's operating costs are 15% higher than the national average. The main driver for this cost difference is higher wages for skilled employees.
- An apparel firm's operating costs are 14% higher than the national average. The main driver is higher wages.

California business leaders implicitly understand the challenge that California public policy presents to their competitiveness. In a survey of CalChamber members by CFCE earlier this year, business leaders reported they are more optimistic about the state's economy than they were two years ago. Only one-quarter rate the economy "poor," compared with half of respondents two years ago. And a third of leaders believe the economy will continue to get better, compared to only a fifth of respondents two years ago.

More business leaders have already added new jobs this year than in previous years, and many are planning to add new jobs next year.

But business leaders still find it much harder to do business in California than in other states. Of those who do business in multiple states, virtually all found it tougher in California.

Once again, the biggest challenge to doing business in California was regulation, identified as the top issue by half of business leaders. Other challenges identified were high state and local taxes, hiring qualified workers, and high healthcare and labor costs.

Employers overwhelmingly believe state leaders should focus on economic development, keeping the budget balanced, addressing water supply and drought issues, and improving California labor regulations.

The California Foundation for Commerce and Education is affiliated with CalChamber and serves as a "think tank" for the California business community. The foundation is dedicated to preserving and strengthening the California business climate and private enterprise through accurate, impartial and objective research and analysis of public policy issues of interest to the California business and public policy communities.

Rep. Nunes' Day in Dinuba

I recently spent a great day in Dinuba, where I was honored to present Fred Ruiz with a resolution commemorating the 50-year anniversary of Ruiz Foods. I also want to thank Reda and Brenda Bennani for the excellent lunch they provided at Bennani's restaurant.

Devin Nunes

CALL FOR DETAILS

Tulare Laundromat Business For Sale

Prime Industrial Highway 65 Frontage
Porterville, CA

PRICE REDUCED!!

Redwood Realty

Janet M. Lazarus, Owner/Broker BRE #01201762 Loretta Burnes, Sales Associate BRE #01243728

4500 S. Laspina, Suites 207 & 208, Tulare, CA 93274

(559) 688-3300

County Improves Visibility

Since 2006, Tulare County has posted audio recordings of its board of supervisors' meetings online. The recordings allow those who are unable to attend the Tuesday morning meetings to listen in.

Further steps were recently taken by the Tulare County Information & Communications Technology Department (TCiCT) to ensure that anyone can access the meetings.

This year, the county experienced two instances when the recording was not available. A need was identified to provide a reliable backup. TCiCT put a redundancy plan into place by implementing a secondary system.

The additional system of two backup recorders was first used during the September 9 board meeting. One device records directly from the microphone output, while the other records from its internal microphone. Both have a battery backup.

Each records to an SD memory card. The copy can then be uploaded. If the live feed is unavailable for streaming, the new system's recording can be published online.

The secondary system continues to promote the county's efforts to be transparent. It will be regularly tested.`

General Plan

Continued from p. 1

mandatory are the developer mitigation fees. Any landowner who wants to develop their land will have to pay these fees.

Another salient point is that, once a piece of farmland is put into a conservation trust, it is in the trust for perpetuity. Then the question becomes, what happens when that piece of land permanently loses its water? What happens if neighboring residents ban farming because of pesticide drift or seasonal dust clouds that happen during harvest or planting? What Visalia will end up with is a bunch of weed-infested dust bowls that can't be developed. The TCFB is not against agricultural conservation easements and believes a countywide program could be debated.

Blain also brought up a major point discussed at the last General Plan meeting, supported by Nelsen, that an isolated Visalia mitigation plan could backfire. Tulare and Porterville could say, "Hey, come over here and develop where it's cheaper."

Larry Peltzer, a fourth-generation farmer, explained that he was against the mitigation program because of the drought and also because now farmers' groundwater is going to be regulated.

Sam Sciacca, a realtor and farmer, was also against mandatory developer fees. He said that when farmers sell their farmland they self-mitigate. Through the 1031 exchanges, farmers just buy another piece of farmland.

In the final analysis, those opposed to the AMP were urging the city council to adopt the GPU as proposed.

Interspersed with arguments against the AMP were speakers who made the case to embrace the farmland mitigation program. Daniel O'Connell, former director of SRT, said he brought his own propaganda because there has been a lot of propaganda going around. He displayed a 1915 map of Los Angeles County, not really visible to the audience, which illustrated how much farmland used to exist in the city. This, of course, makes sense because the southland wasn't very populated at the time.

O'Connell said that L.A. County was the number one ag producing county in California from 1915 to 1949, before that distinction was taken over by Fresno County. Now Tulare County has surpassed Fresno as the number one ag producer, probably, he said, because L.A. County paved over so much of their farmland. Marilyn Kinoshita, Tulare County agricultural commissioner/sealer, actually said during her report to the Tulare County Board of Supervisors this summer that Fresno lost its number one spot because Westlands Water District had to fallow hundreds of acres because of the drought.

O'Connell mentioned that there are two other cities in California that have successful ag mitigation programs. Davis is one of them and it does not have a one-to-one ratio, but a five-to-one mitigation program. The other town was in Stanislaus County. He explained that there are lots of ag easements all over the country. "This is nothing new, except in Tulare County." He ended his presentation saying that, "those who are fighting most against an AMP are the ones with the most economic gain to be had. But at whose benefit?"

Sopac Mulholland, executive director of SRT, pointed out the fact that all general plans tell landowners what to do. The plan tells the landowners if they can develop, and what they can build on their property, and how big the homes or commercial buildings can be. "It's called planning," she said.

"I have been a member of the Farm Bureau for 50 years and not all farmers feel the same as Brian Blain. We help ranchers ranch and farmers farm." She explained that ag mitigation is just another tool to use to help keep the county number one in farming. Mulholland also pointed out that this was not a tax. This is a fee just like an impact fee or a fee to pay for schools. This makes it a level playing field because all developers pay a flat fee.

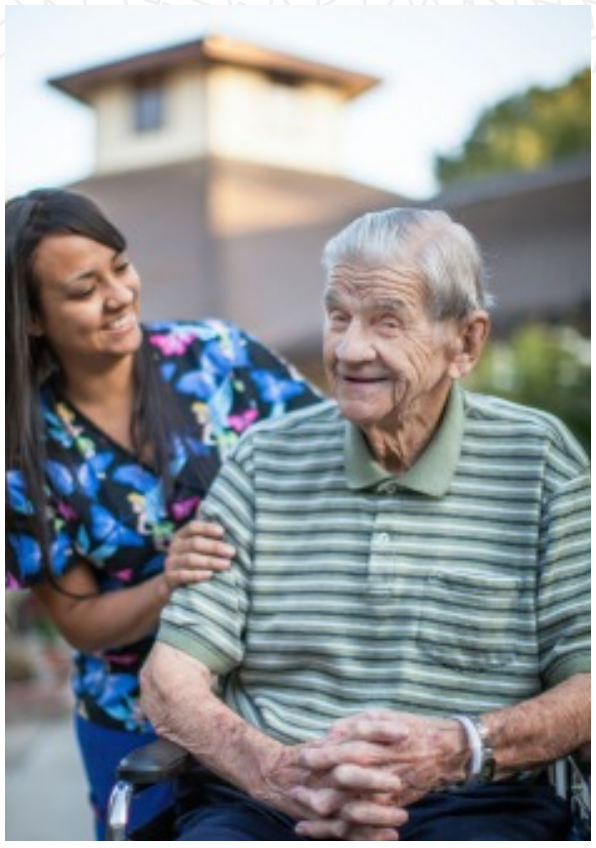
Scott Spear, former board member of SRT, said that by 2030 there will be 50 million people in California and the population will gobble up the area's agriculture land. "Does Visalia have the guts to preserve this industry?" he asked.

Richard Harriman, a lawyer from Chico who has served on their land conservation trust board, encouraged the city to adopt a faster timeline for acquisition of the Scenic Corridor. He commended Council Member Greg Collins for being a trailblazer in the field of responsible land-use issues. Harriman's recommendation was to send the GPU back to staff so they could obtain sufficient evidence that an ag mitigation program is not financially feasible before the council considers rejecting it.

While Blain was making his statement earlier in the evening, Collins asked him if the TCFB had any solutions to the loss of farmland. Blain reiterated that everyone wants a buffer between Tulare and Visalia but the TCFB does not have the solution. Collins replied that we could learn from history, "This has all been played out before." To that, Blain said that when people use farms to block growth the farm industry takes offense. We are farmers not developers.

Collins expressed later that week that there obviously are two schools of thought on the Ag Mitigation Program, but that he was certain the council would be able to come up with an acceptable compromise. Out of the 12 General Plan items that need to be addressed, the city council could pass the Environmental Impact Report and the Climate Action Plan at their next meeting. If a modified version of the AMP were adopted by the council, it would be a part of the city's EIR.

The October 14 special meeting occurred after press time.



Mike Spata is the newly-appointed Resource Management Agency director.

Tulare County Appoints Spata as New Resource Management Agency Director

Staff Reports

The Tulare County Board of Supervisors has appointed Mike Spata as the county's new Resource Management Agency (RMA) director.

Board of Supervisors Chairman Phil Cox said Spata's proven track record as assistant RMA director was the deciding factor in his appointment as director. "Based on his experience within the department, the board is confident Mike will do a fantastic job leading RMA," said Cox.

While in Tulare County, Spata was the associate director and assistant director - planning at the Resource Management Agency. His appointment to director comes on the heels of Jake Raper's retirement from the position on October 1.

"I am honored to be working for the Tulare County Board of Supervisors, county administrative officer and Resource Management Agency, all of whom are committed to excellence in service of the public," said Spata. "I look forward to helping guide RMA on a strategic path, particularly by emphasizing team-based collaboration to implement the key goals of Tulare County's Strategic Business Plan, namely, economic well-being, quality of life, public safety/security and organizational performance."

Spata has over 37 years of public and private sector experience in law, finance and administration. He has a B.A. in government and politics from the University of Maryland, a J.D. from Western State University and an LL.M. in tax law from the University of San Diego. Spata also received an M.P.A. and M.B.A. from California State University, Fresno and has held other local government positions including city attorney, interim city manager and assistant county administrative officer.

The board of supervisors officially appointed Spata as director of RMA after its October 7 meeting. Spata will earn $152,000 annually.

Tulare County Youth Program Honored as One of Best in State

Staff Reports

Tulare County's Step Up #LEAD Program has been recognized as a Merit Award recipient of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) 2014 Challenge Awards, which recognize the most innovative and cost-effective programs developed by California's 58 counties. These awards identify and applaud the progressive ways California county governments provide programs and services to their citizens.

The goal of the Step Up #LEAD (Leading, Educating, Advocating and Dedication) leadership and mentoring program is to inspire and empower high school students to make a difference in their community, foster civic engagement, learn the skills to mentor younger students and better position them for life outside of K-12 education.

"The CSAC Challenge Awards program exemplifies the very best of county government." CSAC Executive Director Matt Cate said. "The programs highlighted each year demonstrate how California's 58 counties are striving to continuously serve their constituents more efficiently and cost-effectively. Innovation is alive and well in California counties."

CSET (Community Service Education and Training) provides curriculum as well as instructors to hold sessions meant to engage youth on subjects ranging from listening barriers, stress management and financial literacy to mentorship principles, college and employment preparedness and "identifying your passion." College of the Sequoias provides the session space on their campus at no charge, including free parking for all participants. Visalia Unified School District allows for the active recruitment of students from their district to be a part of the program, and both Tulare County Probation and Tulare County Health and Human Services departments use their networks to connect with youth who could potentially benefit by being a part of #LEAD.

"We are extremely excited that the work done by the County's Step Up #LEAD Program is being recognized by CSAC as one of the best county programs in the state," said Phil Cox, chairman of the Tulare County Board of Supervisors. "Tulare County is actively seeking to provide positive experiences for our youth and the Step Up #LEAD Program plays an important role in accomplishing that goal."

Overall, a total of 41 programs from 18 counties will receive one of the three levels of awards: Innovation, Challenge and Merit. Beyond Tulare County, other counties to be honored with Merit Awards include Merced, Placer and San Luis Obispo.

For a complete list of award-winning programs and more information on the CSAC Challenge Awards, visit www.counties.org/challenge-awards.

NEXT DEADLINE: 30 October 2014

Fire, Water, Mold & Trauma Restoration
Residential & Commercial Cleaning
Construction & Demolition

ServiceMASTER Restore®

ServiceMaster by Benevento
559-625-8554
servicemasterbybenevento.com

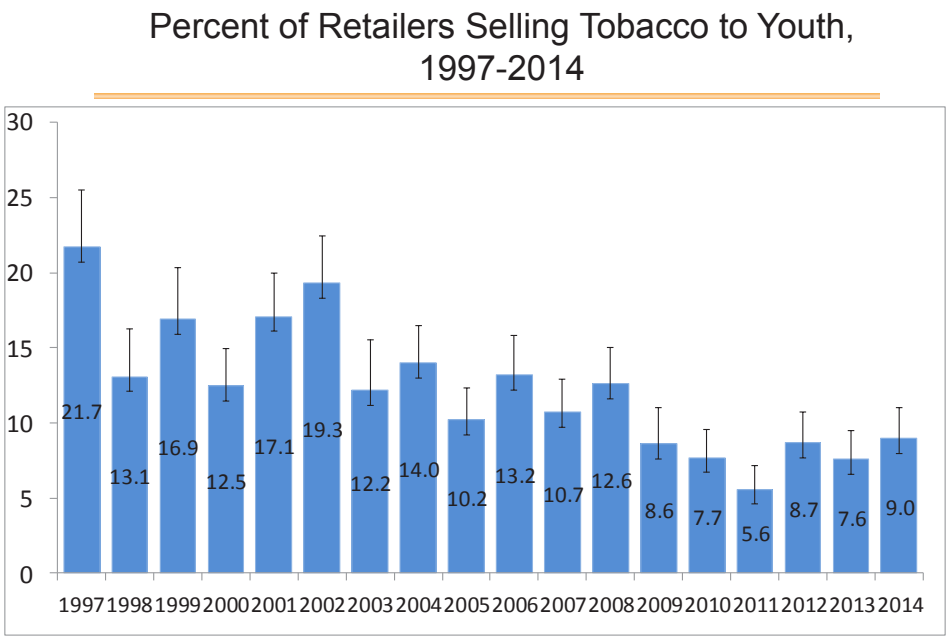
Thank you to our loyal customers for helping us become the
Visalia Chamber of Commerce
2014 Medium Business of the Year!

Serving Tulare, Kings and Kern Counties • 24/7/365

JIM MANNING
DODGE CHRYSLER Jeep RAM SRT
www.JimManningDodge.com
Huge selection of NEW VEHICLES ready for Delivery
INTRODUCING THE RAM 1500
ECODIESEL
IN STOCK NOW

RAM 1500
MOTOR TREND TRUCK OF THE YEAR ★ 2013 2014 ★ FIRST EVER BACK-TO-BACK CHAMPION

DOWNTOWN DINUBA
(559) 591 - 4910
Sales Hours: M-F 7:30am - 7:00pm • Sat. 8:30am - 5:00pm • Closed Sundays
Commercial Buyer Incentives • Friendly & Knowlegeable Sales Staff



Rate of Illegal Tobacco Sales to Youth Increases in California

Staff Reports

Dr. Ron Chapman, director of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and state health officer, released the California rate of illegal tobacco sales to minors, which has increased to the highest rate since 2008. The 2014 Youth Tobacco Purchase Survey found that illegal tobacco sales to minors at retail outlets occurred at a rate of 9%, compared to 7.6% last year.

"While we are pleased that this is the sixth consecutive year our illegal sales to minors rate remained under 10%, we are concerned that a higher percentage of youths this year illegally had access to tobacco products than in recent years," Chapman said.

The illegal sales rate in tobacco stores was especially high in 2014 at 18.6%. Other types of stores with particularly high rates of illegal sales include convenience stores that sell gasoline (10.4%); restaurants, donut shops, meat and produce markets (9.6%); and other less common store types, such as discount and gift stores, gas stations without convenience stores and car washes (9.5%).

In 2014, supermarkets and drug stores/pharmacies had the lowest rate of illegal sales at 3.2% and 5.8%, respectively. In addition, 8.1% of liquor stores illegally sold tobacco to minors.

In California, 10.5% of high school students reported smoking in the last 30 days (2012). The state's adult smoking prevalence rate is 11.7% (2013), which has consistently been the second lowest in the nation. Lung cancer is decreasing in California three times faster than the rest of the nation.

This annual survey of illegal sales of cigarettes to minors is conducted to gauge the rate of illegal tobacco sales across California and to comply with the Stop Tobacco Access to Kids Enforcement (STAKE) Act. All U.S. states and territories are required to assess their rate of illegal sales of tobacco to youth, pursuant to the Federal Synar Amendment.

Besides conducting the annual survey, the California Department of Public Health, Food and Drug Branch, conducts ongoing illegal sales enforcement operations. California retailers caught selling tobacco products to minors during these enforcement operations are subject to fines up to $6,000.

Kaweah Delta Receives State Grant for Residency Program

Kaweah Delta Health Care District will receive a $1.35 million grant that will allow psychiatric residents to train locally, and following graduation, encourage them to work in California's public mental health system.

The grant, which will be given in three annual $450,000 payments, is from the California Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD). It will allow a faculty psychiatrist to locate in the Tulare County Health and Human Services Agency facilities and supervise psychiatry residents in Kaweah Delta's psychiatric residency program as they provide critical mental health services to county patients.

"We are delighted to receive this grant award from OSHPD," said Elizabeth Tully, M.D., program director of Kaweah Delta's new psychiatry program, which began in July. "Partnering with Tulare County HHSA will help us all advance access to psychiatric care for the seriously mentally ill in our community."

Kaweah Delta's psychiatry residency program is one of the district's three residency programs. The psychiatry residency program's first class of four resident physicians will graduate in 2018, and will be board-eligible adult psychiatrists.

Filming

Continued from p. 1

York, Louisiana and Michigan started offering tax breaks, California lost two-thirds of its production of regular episodic television, according to Eric Coyne, Tulare County film commissioner & tourism manager, who explained why it was important that the new legislation stay in place for five years.

The video for "SoundWave" by R3hab & Trevor Guthrie

"If you're doing a movie, it could take two to five years to get the financing and get the talent, timing and weather lined up," he said. "If it was subject to annual renewal, you're not going to make a business plan, not knowing what the business climate will be like next year. With five years, it gives a chance for Disney to plan a 'tentpole,' a $100+ million film, and know that something will be there."

Coyne said that North Carolina recently ended a similar tax break. "When North Carolina started theirs, one of the first films they attracted was 'Forrest Gump," he said. "They built an entire industry. They were getting TV series. When you get TV series, that's when you build a studio. That's when people move to whatever location with their families. When you do a typical TV show, you've got 250 workers plus families – 1,000 people. Then you get into support, caterers, post-production. Pretty soon you get into an enormous amount of jobs."

Governor Brown signs AB 1839. Photo Credit: Brad Alexander, Governor's Office of Emergency Services.

Coyne is the main salesman for film locations in Tulare County.

"Tulare County visually can be anything except an urban metropolis," he said. "You can count on one hand the number of five-story buildings in the county, but if you can get past that, if you don't need that skyscraper landscape, if you don't need a bay bridge and don't need an ocean, we can do it. If you need desert: Alpaugh. You'd be surprised how many movies are shot over there. The first one comes to mind is 'Son-In-Law."

Coyne noted that Highway 198 provided the setting for a scene in "Forest Gump." (A long list of films with scenes filmed in Tulare County, which includes "Stagecoach," "Hulk" and "Casino," is at www.filmtularecounty.com.)

The county has also provided settings for music videos, most recently for R3hab & Trevor Guthrie and Oscarcito, and for commercials, including an Office Depot commercial run during a Super Bowl.

"We played Montana," said Coyne about the commercial, which was filmed two weeks before it aired. "We had a little snow and they had 20 feet – plus you had to go to Montana."

Coyne works to accommodate the needs of those filming in the county, providing catering and local restaurant information, power generators, helping to negotiate good rates on cars, and suggesting filming locations, such as a farm for a Wal-Mart commercial or locations for the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter Passenger Van web commercial that was filmed late last month on a motocross raceway at DT1 MX Park in Tulare.

"They also wanted a winding road so I told them about Old Stage Road," he said. "If you went out there and you looked at it, you'd say, 'I've seen this before.' Car commercials, tire commercials, motorcycle commercials. This is one of the top dozen most filmed places for car commercials. They come here and we're famous for it, a beautiful windy road with beautiful scenic cows and oak trees."

When Aveda, a company that prides itself on "connecting beauty, environment and well-being," wanted a nature setting, they decided to film among the redwoods in Balch Park – after learning that their fees were going directly to the park. They brought 48 people to the county for a four-hour shoot.

"They're very image conscious," said Coyne. "No bottled water on set. They wanted mineral water poured out of glasses that could be rewashed. OK, I've got a caterer that will do that, delivered and set up on linen tablecloths and no paper towels, in the middle of the forest."

Coyne's duties unfortunately cut short his comments. He suddenly needed to get a permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to allow the Aflac Duck into a local national park. Filming of a new Aflac commercial was scheduled for late last week.

Transitions Children's Services
BECOME A FOSTER PARENT!
Open your heart and home to a child in need.
(559) 623-9124
www.transitionschildrensservices.org
Licenced Facility Number: 547206864

Porterville

Continued from p. 1

The Trevor Project, Porterville Equality and Fairness For All, Tulare-Kings Counties PFLAG, Porterville College Pride Club, and local Gay Straight Alliance Clubs at high schools.

Porterville's newly-elected Mayor Milt Stowe declined to sponsor the proclamation because it was not all-inclusive, LGBT advocates said. The council had previously voted down or refused other LGBT-related proclamations for the same reason.

"The National Coming Out Day proclamation is geared towards a certain sector of the community. Coming out is a unique thing to the gay community. It can't be inclusive. It can't be any more inclusive than Cinco de Mayo or Black History Month," Brock Neeley, a local LGBT advocate, said. "We hope the one [Equality Proclamation] gets voted down, and we are going to bring the awareness forward, since they didn't."

By Any Other Name

In lieu of the desired Coming Out Day proclamation, Stowe sponsored a submitted "Celebration of Equality and Fairness and Respect for Rights for All Week" proclamation submitted by Barry Caplan of Porterville Equality and Fairness for All, which stated, in part:

The City of Porterville is committed to upholding the law of the land as well as the human rights of all persons in Porterville, including, but not limited to, United States citizens and citizens of other nations who have entered into the United States in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations, and including, but not limited to members of protected classes enumerated in US and/or California Constitutions and court decisions at the highest level in each jurisdiction, including but not limited to … Sexual Orientation.

"The second proclamation is about economic justice as it represents affirmation of rights of all that city council voted on in 2003 before the Prop 8 resolution in 2008," Caplan said before the vote. "The only difference is that it lists the protected classes that were only implied in the original languge. That deserves a full and routine vote as well."

"If that's too much for them to vote on, then they're going to have to stand up on the record and say we do not stand up for equal rights for all, even though we may have -- or our predecessors did -- in 2003," Caplan continued.

The proclamation was rejected unanimously by the council.

"It's so redundant. It's legislative process that we've already put not in proclamation form but in resolution form and it's almost written in such a way that it's plagiarizing our own words," Council Member Cameron Hamilton said during discussion of the equality proclamation.

"I still feel that recognition needs to be made, I don't believe this proclamation does that," said Council Member Virginia Gurrola. "I still feel that there needs to be recognition made for many of the reasons that were brought out today."

"Well, I feel sorry for anybody who needs a proclamation to make themselves whole," Hamilton said. "Plain and simple."

Trustees

Continued from p. 1

seeing its resources increase from $1 million to "almost $10 million." He added that three bonds were passed and two new COS campuses were built during his tenure. He also listed the hiring of Stan Carrizosa as COS president/superintendent as one of the things he was proudest of during his terms.

Sherman then addressed the accreditation issue that COS has been facing. Although Barton didn't raise this issue at the forum, her campaign literature available by the door included the statement, "Laurel knows how dangerously close the College of the Sequoias came to losing its accreditation, and believes it is the role of the trustees to act early and decisively to guarantee this never happens again."

"COS is strong today as a result of accreditation," said Sherman. "We filed a final report to the ACJC (Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges) last Monday. The ACJC has asked COS to be a model of how to turn things around."

In response to a question about new state legislation that will allow 15 state community colleges to offer four-year degree programs in vocational fields, Sherman responded, "We'd like to get a four-year degree here at COS," adding that if COS becomes part of the program, the most likely degree would be in physical therapy.

If elected, Barton would spend her first 100 days "working on visiting most of the facilities. I would meet a lot more of the faculty and the students so I would have a better idea of who we are. Who is COS? It's easy to lose track of who you work for."

If re-elected, Sherman noted that the first 100 days of his third term would likely include COS getting off its warning status for accreditation. "Settling with the union would also be nice."

When asked about the connection between COS and the community, Barton said, "It's been sort of an eye-opener to me to find out what is going on in students' minds and hearts. What I find is people who have a dream and have a family behind them and the will to succeed."

Tootle then read a question about how COS might become more energy and water-efficient.

"One thing we're doing right now is we're considering putting solar on the Visalia campus and also on the Tulare campus," said Sherman. "As far as water, one of the neighbors was complaining to me that we weren't saving enough water as good citizens."

Barton was asked what she imagined being proudest of if she served eight years on the board. She responded, "To have been able to complete some of the buildings on the Tulare and Hanford campuses, and to fulfill some of the projects that are just getting started."

Replying to a question about her toughest decision in public office, Barton talked about her city council vote about the zoning of a proposed school on church property in an approach zone near the Visalia Airport. "The council chambers were packed; the hallway was packed. When the vote was taken, it was 4-1, and I was the '1.' I was booed, but I thought it was valuable to protect children from being in an airport approach zone."

The candidates were then asked about developmental education and ESL (English as a Second Language), and in getting funding for these programs.

Barton talked about her experience writing grant proposals for the City of Visalia. "I think that COS should be looking at this to give another service to our community, but (grants are) never free money. There's always strings attached."

Sherman would prefer to use any developmental education and ESL funds to enable local high schools to offer their students the classes necessary to make them college-ready.

To increase the rate of transfers from COS into the University of California system, Barton noted "a disconnect between what courses are taken (at COS) and what courses are needed (by the UC system)."

The Adjunct Faculty Association, which hosted the event, represents 309 part-time contingent faculty at COS.

Kaweah Delta Wellness & You Presents:

MANAGEMENT OF JOINT PAIN

This Event is FREE & Open to the Public.

WHEN:
Thursday, October 23, 2014
5 p.m. to 6 p.m.

SPEAKER:
James R Guadagni, M.D.

WHERE:
Kaweah Delta Rehabilitation Hospital
Bear Conference Room
840 South Akers
Visalia, CA 93277

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WILL BE AVAILABLE

Questions:
Contact Marketing
@ 559-624-2463

Kaweah Delta HEALTH CARE DISTRICT

Tulare City 'Read to Succeed' Program Receives Southern California Edison Grant

Staff Reports

A Southern California Edison Community Grant, designated for the Tulare City branch of the County Library Read to Succeed literacy program, has been received by the Tulare County Library Foundation.

The grant, "Transforming Tulare," has the primary focus of assisting young adults in workforce readiness. The participants will be shown how to create employment portfolios and resumes, and given practice in interview skills.

Training will be given by Tulare City Chamber of Commerce members who have a history of success in the business world and are currently active in the hiring process for their companies. The chamber panel provides insight to what employers are looking for in the city of Tulare.

A pilot project, coordinated by the chamber members and Read to Succeed Tulare Literacy Specialist Kim Torrez, is currently underway. After the results of this project are determined, a fully developed program, funded by the grant, will be opened to Read to Succeed students in Tulare.

According to Torrez, Kathleen Johnson, CEO of the chamber, was very instrumental in getting this program started. "Without Kathleen's amazing knowledge, encouragement and support, we would not have received this much needed grant from Southern California Edison," she said. "The Read to Succeed program is very grateful to her and to the chamber members participating in this project."

"The chamber members are very excited about this program," said Johnson. "It completely falls in line with our mission of promoting economic opportunities and business prosperity in the city of Tulare. The chamber panel has been very giving to students in the pilot program, sometimes serving as mentors to them. The enthusiasm of the participants demonstrates to us that the chamber will indeed be helping to provide a valuable and skilled work force for our city."

Kaweah Delta Signs Agreement for Neurosurgery Services

Staff Reports

In an effort to fill one of the most pressing community healthcare needs in Visalia, Kaweah Delta Health Care District will soon provide emergency and locally-based neurosurgical coverage.

The Kaweah Delta Board of Directors has approved a three-year agreement with University Neurosurgical Associates to provide neurosurgical emergency department call and consultations in the hospital 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. The group is made up of six highly qualified and experienced neurosurgeons based out of Fresno and a newly recruited neurosurgeon who will reside in Visalia. The group will also develop a Visalia-based medical office for patient consultations and referrals.

"It will provide our patients and the community with ready access to neurosurgical consultations and emergency care for cranial neurosurgical needs such as blood clots, bruising or swelling in the brain," said Lindsay Mann, CEO of Kaweah Delta. "Conditions such as strokes, which can be managed medically, but often require the immediate availability of neurosurgical capabilities will be supported by this agreement."

The agreement may help Kaweah Delta, currently the only level three trauma center between Fresno and Bakersfield, become a level two trauma center. That means Kaweah Delta will be able to serve patients in need of more critical care, including cranial surgery if necessary.

In addition to providing neurosurgery services, the board also unanimously approved:

- Development of a second urgent care center in northwest Visalia. It will provide radiology and lab services for patients, helping them receive care in a more timely manner for minor injuries than if they were to seek treatment in Kaweah Delta's Emergency Department, one of the busiest ERs in the state, serving well over 90,000 patients a year.
- Expansion of its Quail Park Enhanced Assisted Living Facility from a 12-bed facility to a 25-bed facility. For the past year, there has been a waiting list at this facility of patients in need of a higher level of assisted living care.
- Development of a 3,000-square-foot outpatient rehabilitation services in Dinuba adjacent to where this fall Kaweah Delta will open Dinuba Rural Health Clinic, its fourth rural clinic, at 855 Monte Vista Dr. This facility will provide physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy, and will provide patients with private treatment rooms and an open gym area with the latest innovative therapy equipment.

Print replica available at
issuu.com/ourvalleyvoice

FREE ESTIMATES
SI, HABLAMOS ESPAÑOL
AltSys Solar Inc.
559.688.2544
1434 E. Tulare Ave., Tulare, CA 93274
www.altsyssolar.com
Contractor License # 944549 C-46 Solar
Best Prices in the Valley and Serving the Valley Since 1979
AC Solar Starter Kits Now Available
$1,499

With life insurance, the benefits live on.
Justin Mosley, Agent
Insurance Lic#: 0I02569
991 N Blackstone Street
Tulare, CA 93274
Bus: 559-688-1888
There are also benefits now.
I'll show you how life insurance can come in handy for more immediate family needs, like college.
We put the life back in life insurance.
CALL ME TODAY.
State Farm™
State Farm Insurance Company (Not licensed in MA, NY or WI)
State Farm Life and Accident Assurance Company
(Licensed in NY and WI)
Bloomington, IL
1311019

AUTO OIL CHANGERS
10 Minute Lube Oil-N-Filter
10 Minute Lube Oil-N-Filter
We know 10 minutes means a lot!
LOCALLY OWNED AND OPPERATED SINCE 1985
OPEN
Mon.–Sat. 8–5
Now open Sundays 9–3
(at our Demaree Location only)
No Appointment needed
All work Guaranteed
$5.00 OFF Full Service Oil Change
Oil, Lube & Filter Complete 10 Minute Service
223 E. Tulare Ave., Visalia • 1630 E. Main St., Visalia
3550 S. Demaree, Visalia • 1542 Tulare Ave., Tulare

40 Years in Downtown Visalia
MICHAEL'S Custom Jewelry
559-734-7079
316 W. Main St., Visalia, CA 93291
www.michaelscustomjewelry.com

Certified Gemologist Appraiser

COMPLIMENTARY CLEANING AND INSPECTION OF YOUR JEWELRY
3-D DESIGNS
CERTIFIED APPRAISALS
FINE ENGRAVING
RING SIZING
RESTRINGING
WATCH REPAIR
WATCH BATTERIES
WATCH BANDS
STONE REPLACEMENT
PRONG RETIPPING
FREE GIFT WRAPPING WITH PURCHASE

California Citrus Mutual to Contribute $150k to Water Bond Campaign; $50k to Latino Outreach

Staff Reports

California Citrus Mutual (CCM) will directly contribute $150,000 to the campaign to pass Proposition 1, the water bond measure.

The CCM Board of Directors voted unanimously to support the measure in order to secure a reliable and sustainable water supply for California agriculture and communities across the state.

"We are in a state of unprecedented crisis in terms of water supply," said CCM President Joel Nelsen. "CCM worked closely with members of the legislature to create a long term solution path for the state's water infrastructure and sustainability needs. It is essential to the future of agriculture in California that voters approve Proposition 1 this November."

Proposition 1 includes $2.7 billion to build additional water storage that will alleviate pressure upon Millerton Reservoir and water users on the Friant-Kern Canal in critical drought years such as this. Approximately 58% of U.S. fresh citrus is grown by farmers in the Friant service area who received zero surface water allocation from the Central Valley Project for the first time in the project's history this year.

"CCM's contribution of $150,000 is an investment in our future, and the future of California," says CCM Board Chairman Kevin Severns. "It is critical that voters understand the importance of the issue and vote to pass Proposition 1."

Additionally, CCM has committed $50,000 to the "El Agua es Asunto de Todos" (Water is Everybody's Business) outreach campaign to raise awareness among the Latino community about the importance of a reliable water supply for California's economy and jobs.

"CCM is proud to support the 'El Augua' campaign in its effort to empower the Latino community to support policy that creates water for California," concluded Nelsen.

Agriculture Census Provides New Decision-Making Tools for Leaders

Staff Reports

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) released The 2012 Census of Agriculture Congressional District Profiles for the 113th Congress. NASS conducts the agriculture census once every five years.

"The congressional district profiles paint a picture of agriculture at the local level by providing data on farms and ranches and the people who operate them in each district," said NASS Administrator Joseph T. Reilly. "As congressional leaders leave the nation's capital and head home to their districts for summer recess, this information serves as a timely data tool to help them assess agriculture and rural community issues in their area."

A variety of data points are published in the congressional district profiles including:

- Number of farms, land in farms, average size of farm
- Market value of products sold, average per farm
- Crop sales, livestock sales
- Government payments, average per farm receiving payments
- Value of sales by commodity group
- Top crop and livestock items
- Economic characteristics
- Operator characteristics

The congressional district profiles continue the series of products NASS has published following the May release of the 2012 Census of Agriculture results. NASS will release new products throughout the year to highlight census data on the more than 3.2 million U.S. farmers providing food, fuel, feed and fiber to the world.

"NASS is committed to providing timely, accurate and useful statistics and part of that is ensuring that data are available to leaders to make informed policy decisions on behalf of the constituents they represent in their districts," said Reilly.

For access to the 2012 Census of Agriculture Congressional District Profiles and other census data and tools, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov.

USDA: Organic Farms Connect Consumers with their Food

Staff Reports

Certified organic agriculture producers in the United States sell directly to consumers, produce on-farm renewable energy, and are younger and beginning farmers more often than conventional producers, according to new 2012 Census of Agriculture data released by the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). Conducted only once every five years, the agriculture census presents a detailed look at the U.S. organic farm sector including production practices, economics and demographics.

"Earlier this year, the 2012 Agriculture Census reported that total organic product sales by farms in the U.S. increased 83% since 2007," said NASS Administrator Joseph T. Reilly. "This information, combined with the more comprehensive data released today, shows the demand for, value of and potential for continued growth in certified organic products."

The 2012 Census of Agriculture Organic Special Tabulation provides national and state level data on farms, land in farms and tenure; production expenses, equipment and machinery; farm income and government payments; land use and practices; operator characteristics; and more.

Some of the key findings include:

Organic agriculture producers were much more likely to report direct-to-consumer sales than conventional producers. While only 7% of all U.S. farms sold agricultural products directly to consumers, 42% of organic farms reported direct sales to consumers.

Organic farms were more likely than other farms to participate in non-traditional markets: 30% marketed products directly to retail outlets, 16% produced value-added products, and 13% distributed products through CSAs (community supported agriculture).

Organic farms were more likely than other farms to invest in on-farm renewable energy producing systems, such as solar panels and wind turbines.

Organic operations were also more likely to sell crops, such as fruits and vegetables, than livestock and poultry products. Almost 90% sold crops, while a slightly fewer than 50% sold livestock or poultry products.

Organic producers were more likely to be beginning farmers, with 27% starting farming in the last 10 years, compared to 18% of all principal farm operators.

Organic operators were younger, with 26% under 45 years old, compared to 16% of all principal operators.

"These new data points from the agriculture census provide valuable information to help our stakeholders identify producer successes and needs to help them develop programs to benefit the organic industry," said Reilly. "NASS is committed to continuing to help measure the organic industry and is looking forward to conducting the 2014 Organic Survey early next year."

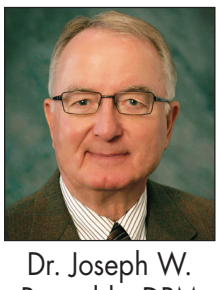
To access the 2012 Census of Agriculture Organic Special Tabulation and all other Census data and tools, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov.

RECYCLE THIS PAPER
TEACH YOUR BIRD TO READ

Tired of fighting stubborn nail fungus?

Doctor Reynolds offers a quick and painless solution! Find out how you can enjoy clearer nails without medications.

Request an appointment by calling Mary at 738-7589.



Dr. Joseph W. Reynolds, DPM

Be Well
Visalia Medical Clinic
VMCHealthyFeet.com

THE HAULERS ASSOCIATION TULARE COUNTY

The Haulers Association Tulare County makes it easy for you to recycle and Go Green!

- Daily recycling: paper, cardboard, glass and plastic
- E-waste (monitors, printers, laptops): Recycle through a certified recycler to protect the earth and your ID
- Green waste (tree and yard trimmings): Recycle and reuse as mulch!
- Household hazardous waste: Auto oil, cleaners, grease, solvents and paint, must be properly recycled.

The team that keeps Tulare County green!

TCHaulers.com

Briefly...

Tulare, Kings Counties Rank High on 'Man-Made Hazards' List

RealtyTrac, a respected source for comprehensive housing data, released its first-ever report ranking all U.S. counties based on the prevalence of man-made environmental hazards. Neither Tulare County nor Kings County fared well in the report.

Kings County placed 16th on the list of the top 50 counties with the "highest prevalence of man-made environmental hazards." Tulare County was 19th on the list. Both counties earned their spots based on their percentages of bad air quality days: Kings County with 15.71%, and Tulare County with 15.02%.

The report also evaluated four other man-made environmental hazards tracked by RealtyTrac subsidiary Homefacts in all 3,143 U.S. counties: the number of superfund sites, brownfield sites, polluters and former drug labs per square mile. An aggregate score based on these five factors was created for each county, with a higher score representing a higher prevalence of man-made environmental hazards.

Tulare County Deputy Sheriff's Association Donates Water Tank

In ongoing efforts to partner with the communities it protects, the Tulare County Deputy Sheriff's Association has funded and donated a 5,000-gallon water tank for use by the residents of the East Porterville area.

Through collaboration with the County of Tulare and the Office of Emergency Services, the tank has been installed, plumbed and filled with water. It is ready for use by the several hundred nearby residents who are in need of water.

Most residents of this area live in homes that have private wells. Due to the drought, a majority of these wells have run dry. This has caused people to be without useable water for months, causing severe problems in the day-to-day needs of washing clothes, washing dishes, flushing toilets, etc.

There was an official presentation ceremony at the site on October 9.

Tulare County Offers Weekly Drought Updates Online

Drought status updates are now hosted weekly on the Tulare County Emergency site (tularecounty.ca.gov/emergencies) under the "Drought" heading. Links on the page inform residents on the status of the drought, report private well failures, and provide links to assistance for the bottled water program and service providers, water policies, and drought effects status updates.

The site is hosted by Tulare County Office of Emergency Services (OES), which provides the updates, along with the Tulare County Resource Management Agency, Tulare County Health & Human Services Agency, FoodLink, the Workforce Investment Board, United Way and other partners. Residents can also call 211 for needed resource information if they are affected by the drought.

Health Services Information Available at Alpaugh Event

Residents of Alpaugh can receive information about health services and other community resources available to them at the community outreach event that will be held Monday, October 20, from 5:30-6:30pm at Alpaugh School.

"I am excited at the opportunity to bring a variety of resources to the residents of Alpaugh through this community outreach event, said Tulare County Supervisor Pete Vander Poel. "Community residents who attend can learn about and sign up for services ranging from free flu shots provided by Tulare County Health & Human Services Agency to residential energy efficiency upgrades provided by PG&E."

A&W Hosts Field Trip for YEA! Students

On October 14, students from the Tulare & Visalia Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) visited the A&W Restaurant on the corner of Riggin and Mooney Blvd. in Visalia for a behind-the-scenes look at what it takes to run a successful business franchise.

Franchise owner Craig Van Horn shared his entrepreneurial success story with the students. YEA! students heard why he decided to own A&W franchises, what the challenges have been and what skills it takes to keep the business running. The field trip also taught the students the importance of this unique type of business's operations and structure.

Drought Relief Fundraising Campaign Exceeds Goal

Community Water Center Co-Executive Directors Susana De Anda and Laurel Firestone announced that the center's week-long fundraising campaign to connect residents with the resources needed for both emergency drought relief and lasting water solutions exceeded its $6,000 goal by 25%, raising a total of $7,568.

Cardiologist Joins Visalia Medical Clinic

Tulare Western High School graduate Ashkan Attaran, MD, has returned to Tulare County as a cardiologist at Visalia Medical Clinic.

Dr. Attaran, who lived in Visalia prior to moving to Tulare, earned his undergraduate degree in biology at Fresno State University, completed medical school at the University of Cincinnati School of Medicine, and completed his internship and residency in internal medicine at the University of Southern California. He then completed his fellowship in cardiology at Georgia Regents University.

His work experience includes three years in the Emergency Room at the VA Medical Center in Augusta, Georgia. He is board certified in internal medicine and is a member of the American Medical Association.

Girl Scouts Going Nuts This Fall

Get ready for the Girl Scouts of Central California South's line of nuts, candies and chocolates. Local Girls Scouts began taking initial orders on their fall products last week. Available are 10 varieties of treats, including Butter Toasted Peanuts, Peanut Butter Bears, Deluxe Pecan Clusters and the new gummy Fruit Slices and the Almond Cran-Orange Crunch.

By selling these treats, Girl Scouts learn the skills of goal setting, decision-making, money management, people skills and business ethics. In addition to the nuts and candies, the girls are also selling magazine subscriptions and keepsake books.

Lemoore Staff Sergeant Honored by Culinary Institute of America

U.S. Marine Corps Staff Sergeant Luis Mendez Jr. of the Naval Air Station in Lemoore was among the "outstanding military servicemen and women from various foodservice operations" honored at the 2014 Armed Forces Forum for Culinary Excellence at the Culinary Institute of America in Santa Helena, California last week.

This annual National Restaurant Association Military Foundation event recognizes culinary excellence at Air Force, Air National Guard, Navy, Marine Corps Military Sealift Command installations/ships around the globe, and offers training, education, mentoring and networking opportunities

Cal Water Launches Customer Hardship Grant Program

California Water Service Company has launched a new grant program to help customers who are facing unique hardships.

Through the Cal Water Cares Grant Program, eligible customers can receive a grant of up to $200 to help them pay their water utility bill. Customers may apply for a new grant once every 12 months.

The Cal Water Cares grant program is funded by Cal Water's shareholders, who are contributing $100,000 to eligible customers in 2014.

To be eligible for a hardship grant, a customer's gross household income cannot be higher than the income limits set for the company's Low-Income Ratepayer Assistance Program (www.calwater.com/community/lira). Customers facing economic hardship, such as loss of a job or a medical emergency, but who do not meet the income guidelines may apply, and decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis.

For more information about the Cal Water Cares Customer Grant Program or to apply, Visalia customers should call the Cal Water Customer Center at 624-1600.

TCOE Offers More Ways to Integrate Arts in the Classroom

October begins a yearlong parade of events designed to engage students in the visual and performing arts. Beginning this month with the Young People's Concerts, TCOE's offerings of arts-related events include the annual student art exhibitions, Theatre Company performances and the available On Stage Productions, which are complete musical theatre productions available for Tulare County elementary schools to perform on-site.

The new Tulare County Arts Network (TuCAN) launched this week as a professional learning community. Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) Instructional Consultant Brian Roberts reported that TuCAN is designed to give arts educators the opportunity to share best practices, network with one another and learn about the latest advocacy efforts. To register to attend the no-cost TuCAN meetings, visit tulare.k12oms.org/147-90309, or contact Kate Stover at kstover@tcoe.org.

To supplement the arts collaboration encouraged by TuCAN, Educational Resource Services will host a four-part professional development training, titled "Arts at the Core!," beginning on February 5. The series will focus on the 4Cs (collaboration, communication, creativity and critical thinking) and showcase how dance, music, theatre and visual arts can easily be infused into all content areas. The series will feature an array of presenters who have strong teaching and arts backgrounds.

To register for the "Arts at the Core!" training, visit tulare.k12oms.org/147-89237. For more information about the Visual and Performing Arts, contact Brian Roberts at brianr@tcoe.org.

Business Gallery

Evans Miller Guinn
Exeter Chapel
425 North Kaweah Avenue
Exeter, CA 93221
FD-1058
559-592-5161
Fax 559-592-2071
John and Diane Guinn

RUBEN'S HOME SERVICE INC.
Lic # 879424
A PROPERTY SERVICE COMPANY
Commercial / Residential
Ruben "GENE" Mendoza
(559) 936-1053 • Fax (559) 733-7450
rhscontractor@yahoo.com • RubensHomeServiceInc.com

CA. INSURANCE
LIC. #0820964
ALAN BENOY
INSURANCE SERVICES
HR Support
Group & Individual Benefits
Medicare Supplements
(559) 734-4288
Al@BenoyInsurance.com
www.BenoyInsurance.com

Veteran's Corner

Individual Unemployability

Joe Wright

Individual Unemployability is a part of VA's disability compensation program that allows VA to pay certain veterans compensation at the 100% rate, even though VA has not rated their service-connected disabilities at the total level. To be eligible, a veteran must be unable to maintain substantially gainful employment as a result of his/her service-connected disabilities. Additionally, a veteran must have one service-connected disability ratable at 60% or more, or two or more service-connected disabilities, at least one disability ratable at 40% or more with a combined rating of 70% or more.

Veterans who are in receipt of Individual Unemployability benefits may work as long as it is not considered substantially gainful employment. The employment must be considered marginal employment. Substantially gainful employment is defined as employment at which non-disabled individuals earn their livelihood with earnings comparable to the particular occupation in the community where the veteran resides. Marginal employment is generally deemed to exist when a veteran's earned income does not exceed the amount established by the U.S. Census Bureau as the poverty level for the veteran only.

Special consideration will be given for veterans when the veteran is considered unemployable due to a service-connected disability(ies) but fails to meet the minimum percentage standards, or there is evidence of exceptional or unusual circumstances to impairment of earning capacity due to disabilities (for example, interference with employment or frequent periods of hospitalization). Veterans may have to complete an employment questionnaire once a year in order for VA to determine continued eligibility. Our office can assist you with the application for Individual Unemployability benefits.

The Kings County Veterans Service Office issues Veteran ID cards to honorably discharged veterans. Contact Joe Wright if you would like to receive periodic veteran's information by email. There are many state and federal benefits and programs available to veterans and their dependents. To find out if you are eligible for any of these benefits, visit or call our office. We can and will assist you in completing all required application forms. You can get information on the Web from the Kings County Veterans Service Office webpage at www.countyofkings.com.

Joe Wright, retired Navy Master Chief Petty Officer, is the Veterans Service Officer for Kings County. Send your questions to the Veterans Service Office, 1400 W. Lacey Blvd., Hanford, CA 93230; call 852-2669; or e-mail joe.wright@co.kings.ca.us.

Watch for our special holiday section
...coming soon

An Open Letter to Porterville Mayor Stowe

Mayor Stowe,

First of all, let me welcome you to the Porterville City Council. I, along with many of my friends and co-workers, were encouraged by your appointment to the council and are looking forward to a fresh perspective.

Unfortunately, it seems that a fresh perspective is not to be found among the new leadership on City Council. It was once again very disheartening to see that not one of OUR council members would sponsor the proposed National Coming Out Day Proclamation. As a member of the LGBTQ community and a woman of color on the lower socio-economic spectrum, I am one of the invisible members of the community whose contributions to the community get overlooked and taken for granted.

Many others like myself have no voice and no means of feeling included in the decision making processes of our very own community. A large group of YOUR constituents are feeling these same sentiments, which says a great deal about the disease of intolerance, fear, and hatred that has permeated this area for so long.

Your comments on the radio regarding the proclamation are evidence that logic and reason will continue to be absent on the council dais.

Proclamations are meant to recognize certain individuals or groups of people that have something beneficial and extraordinary to bring to our community. I see that we recently awarded a proclamation to Claudia Brewer in celebration of her 100 years of life and contributions to the community. Good for her! I do not know Ms. Brewer and am not a part of the centenarian community, but I am more than willing to celebrate this milestone with her. The same is true of nurses and those who have suffered domestic violence. I am not included in these groups of people, but I know that these people are important and diverse members of our community.

So, why is it that these people are recognized by our leaders, but members of the LGBTQ community are not? According to you, it is because our proclamation is "not inclusive of everyone." If we apply your logicto other proclamations, nothing would ever get passed through thecouncil, but this is not the case. Individuals like Ms. Brewer are recognized, as they should be. But let's be clear and honest in our rhetoric here. This is not about inclusivity; this is a clear case of exclusivity. The fallacy in your inclusivity logic leads me to believe that this is a case of discrimination, of singling out a group of people to be excluded from the same considerations that other members of the community receive.

As I've said, many of us were hopeful when you and Mr. Reyes became our City Council representatives, hopeful that we might have leadership that would lead us out of the dark social and economic hole that we have dug ourselves, hopeful that someone would bring objectivity, logic, reason, and compassion to the decision-making process, and hopeful that we would have a champion of equality and tolerance. It seems like that hope is unfounded and that we will have to continue to fight tooth and nail for even the smallest bit of recognition in our community. And this is exactly what we will do, without fail, ANYTIME we see discrimination and injustice perpetrated against ANY of our friends and neighbors.

Sincerely Disappointed,
Nicole Celaya

Viewpoint

Lemon Cove Resident Looks Forward to Upcoming Peer Review of CEMEX' Faulty Hydrology Report

Thank you for my being able to receive a copy of the peer review, of which I agree with, except for their comment on page 16 where they state that, "It is possible that the report's conclusions are completely correct."

It is very disturbing and upsetting and disgusting to me that the Tulare County Board of Supervisors (TCBOS) and the Resource Management Agency (RMA,) which is supposed to be looking out for, working for, and protecting the interests, and properties of us, the county residents, tax payers, property owners, and voters who vote them into office and help pay their salaries, have allowed CEMEX to violate so many of the mining permit conditions of approval for over a year. And the TCBOS and RMA would have apparently let them continue if we, the affected Tulare County residents and property owners, would not have gone to the Board of Supervisors without concerns and proof of CEMEX' negligence and exposed it.

With that being said, I would like to state my appreciation to the Board of Supervisors and the RMA for finally requiring a peer Review of the EMKO Hydrology Report, CEMEX Stillwell quarry.

I, as well as my neighbors, would like, and look forward to, a public hearing with the Board of Supervisors and RMA to discuss the findings of this peer Review and what will ensue.

Please note that as my well depth is 17'2" (I have never had a lack of well water issue prior to December 13th 2013) my well water level has gone up from below 16' to 11'6" as of 9/29/2014 due to water being pumped into the V-ditch as the datalogger in my well will also indicate.

In closing, I would like to state the fact that I have spent nearly $4000 (receipts can be provided) on work done and items bought pertaining to my lack of well water situation, not to mention an unexplainable inconvenience and hardship to me and my family as a result of CEMEX and of RMA's negligence.

Sincerely,
Rob Morton

Ending the Government Hate Spiral

Robert J. Gould

Last month, my wife spent two hours waiting at the Department of Motor Vehicles. This past week, at the suggestion of a DMV call center employee, I spent just 45 minutes because I arrived at 7:30am, a half-hour before DMV opened. DMV workers are not unaware that they are generally hated, as is the institution for which they work, the state.

This experience reminds me of so many of the experiences that citizens have with the various government institutions in the U.S. I certainly don't have contact with all of these government services, but of the ones with which I have had direct contact, I've noticed the level of frustration that is entailed, whether it is taxation, licensing, approvals, schools or regulatory agencies. These experiences feed the hatred of government; this hatred is not just the emotion of the political right, it also includes the middle and left. It is no wonder that anti-government hate led Howard Jarvis, author of the famous 1978 anti-taxation Prop 13 in California, to spearhead a nationwide tax revolt.

Unfortunately, cutting taxes and limiting government have so vastly underfunded government services that they cut the capacity of government to decently provide any service.

This is the Government Hate Spiral, where chronic underfunding leads to diminished capacities to serve the public, which leads to further hate-driven tax cuts, which then leads to… you know where I'm going with this—the death spiral of government, where the only thing that the U.S. government does well is lose expensive wars. Does anyone remember Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan? Those were colossal failures, though now we have an effort to resurrect our Middle East wars from the ashes as the Phoenix War Against ISIS—a war that finally does make sense, a war to defend the homeland from a real threat, and provide humanitarian relief for the Yazidis, Kurds, Shi'a, Iraqi Christians and Syrian moderates. Oh wait; can this story be trusted?

Can the government story ever be trusted? How many lies finally push open a credibility gap too wide to span? In the 1960s, the new left said "Question Authority." Now conservatives say the same thing, when it comes to government services, but not war. Conservative leaders, other than Ron and Rand Paul, believe we have not quenched our thirst for war.

How can we turn the Government Hate Spiral around? My suggestion is to rebuild government from the local level up to the federal. I'm generally a big fan of nonprofit organizations because they so often provide such great services in the public interest. This is different from the privatization of government services. I do not mean businesses like profit-making prisons, where the incentive is to make more money by having more prisoners serve longer sentences, even for nonviolent convictions.

In my view, any service that is done to protect and serve the public should be provided by nonprofit organizations, not government agencies. This is because government services have a monstrous ethical defect; they have a conflict of interest, where the same entity both provides and regulates the service—equivalent to the fox making the chickens ignore the interests of the public by keeping the interests of government services aligned with the power and control interests of the state.

My suggested rebuilding of government would limit government to two things, collecting taxes fairly and funding nonprofits that have a track record of actually serving the public, without citizen frustration and fear. This means that even the military-industrial complex needs to be a nonprofit set of organizations that do not traffic in fear, but rather the real security interests of our citizens and indeed others in dire need. Decisions on taxation and the funding of nonprofits must be reviewed by publicly elected officials and should be the subject of ongoing citizen discussion.

Our democracy was borne out of ethical necessity; it is now overdue for a makeover to answer to unforeseen ethical defects that are visible and systemic.

Robert J. Gould, Ph.D., is an ethicist, writes for PeaceVoice, and directs the Conflict Resolution Program at Portland State University.

Comments on CEMEX Peer Review

Dear Mr. Spata,

The Tulare County Farm Bureau has served as a watchdog in the community for many years monitoring land use conditions, permit requests, development activities and seeking to work cooperatively with the County of Tulare on protecting farmland and providing a quality of living for our residents through smart planning and responsible land use decision making.

We are in receipt of the Peer Review Report and Addendum regarding the CEMEX/Stillwell mining operation that operates near Lemon Cove. Upon review of this report and related information we would like to issue the following comments to the County.

CEMEX is clearly in non-compliance of their use permit based on the conditions of approval, and complaints have been issued to the County since January 2014 regarding negative impacts to groundwater around the mining site. It is clear from information that Farm Bureau has received from impacted landowners and concerned citizens that a number of missteps have occurred in remedying this concern. There have been concerns, complaints, and frustration from adjacent landowners dating back to the early 1970s, and here we are today four decades later finally getting to the true heart of the issue.

So far no significant enforcement or corrective action has occurred. We believe the County has not acted swiftly enough to address the true concerns of the impacted landowners and residents and enforce the conditions of approval for the use permit granted to CEMEX. We acknowledge that drought relief aid has assisted in temporarily providing water for drinking purposes, but this issue goes much further.

We believe that CEMEX should be immediately compelled to strictly comply with all Stillwell Project Conditions of Approval. The County has indicated they may act to revoke the permit, modify approval conditions, pursue enforcement actions, or initiate litigation – we believe that all of these actions should be thoroughly explored and acted upon accordingly.

Further, we believe CEMEX should be accountable for the damages done to people and property near the Stillwell plant site operations, and be compelled to make them whole. Slanderous comments made by legal representation of the mining operation towards neighbors and their properties should be discontinued and the record corrected to the extent it contains falsehoods.

The County should take all complaints of the neighbors seriously regarding this issue and act swiftly to respond, and should review complaints received from neighbors who own land adjacent to ALL CEMEX locations in Tulare County's jurisdiction.

Finally, RMA should review the financial assurances required in the CEMEX permit and take corrective action to right this wrong. We are very disappointed in how this matter has been handled by CEMEX and the County of Tulare, and expect higher standards of our public leaders and those entrusted to manage our county's land and water resources. We believe a tremendous disservice to our residents has occurred with this situation, and we ask the County to take immediate corrective actions.

We agree with the conclusion drawn in the peer report on page 16, "the Report's overall evaluation is based on an incomplete set of facts. Thus, the conclusion that the Quarry operations are not at fault is without merit. It is possible that the Report's conclusions are completely correct. But, absent relevant data, coupled with questions about the overall evaluation in the Report, as detailed in the sections above, it is difficult to say CEMEX is without fault." The quality and integrity of the record that CEMEX has provided regarding their compliance to their conditions of approval is not acceptable, false information, incomplete information, and credible experts have been left out of this process much to our disappointment.

We thank the County for the opportunity to comment on this issue and the opportunity to review the Peer Review document. We will participate in the public hearing when a date is announced.

We understand that water pumping has resumed into the V-Ditch. News of this development is encouraging, and we are pleased that restoration of groundwater movement to nearby wells is occurring.

Sincerely,
PATRICIA STEVER BLATTLER
Executive Director

More Students, More Schools!

Craig Wheaton, Ed. D.

Just after Labor Day weekend, Visalia Unified School District reached a new student enrollment high of over 28,000 students. We track enrollment and compare it with prior years, and we are about 250 students above the enrollment at this time last year. That is all good news to the school district and the community. A growth trend is a good indicator of a healthy economy.

More students do mean the need for more schools at some time in the future. As many of you know, Measure E was approved in November 2012 to help modernize our aging schools and to accommodate growth by building a new middle school. The good news is that our groundbreaking ceremony is scheduled in mid-October to commemorate the beginning of the construction on the new middle school. If you travel on Akers Avenue north of Riggins, you will see the groundwork on the new school.

When we approved Measure E, it was with the expectation that the State of California would continue to support local communities by providing matching funds to build and modernize schools. The unfortunate turn of events is that we have a General Election ballot without a school construction bond on it. Both the state assembly and senate overwhelmingly supported a school construction bond, but somewhere on the political bargaining table, other issues like water and high-speed rail bumped school construction off the ballot.

After the dust settles from this election, I am confident that our state elected officials will come back and develop a workable plan to provide funding to modernize aging schools and to add classrooms and schools to meet the needs of children moving into our district. Until that time, Visalia Unified's facility team is working on a plan to move forward with the much needed facility work. Additionally, two new elementary schools are in the design stage; and we are seeking state and other funds to begin building.

During this last summer, we continued to improve our existing schools with security upgrades, playground enhancements, paint, roofing and other maintenance that will improve the quality of our schools. We will complete the Redwood High School classroom building by the end of next summer and will open a new middle school by August 2016. Measure E funds are being invested in our local community, and we are very grateful for the community's support!

Craig Wheaton, Ed.D., is superintendent of the Visalia Unified School District.

Columns & Letters

Latino PAC Votes 'No' On Rudy Mendoza for State Assembly

We, the Latino Political Action Committee of Tulare County, did not endorse a candidate for the 26th State Assembly race however we are issuing a solid "no" recommendation for Rudy Mendoza for State Assembly.

MENDOZA IS LATINO BUT DOESN'T THINK LIKE ONE

Candidate Mendoza, who is running against fellow Republican Devon-Mathis, does not support Latinos nor the concerns of our community despite he himself being Latino. His inability to recognize the concerns and plight of Latinos and his disconnect with the community is one of the reasons why we feel a need to issue the "No" recommendation for his election to the state assembly.

TURNS HIS BACK ON LATINOS, HIS POLITICS, HIS BUSINESS AND ULITMATELY ALL OF US

He does not support immigration reform with a pathway to citizenship, the increase in the minimum wage and other such issues that are dear to Latinos. Yet supports fracking that can and has contaminated our water and has caused illnesses throughout the central valley cities where a large number of Latinos live. We feel he has also turned on his cultural and ethnic community signaled by where he stands on Latino issues. Not too long ago he was a Democrat who turned Republican, he even turned on his own self-proclaimed successful business to work in politics and we believe he will do the same as a legislator and turn his back on what is best for the residents of Tulare County and the district in general for party politics.

GLAMORIZED EFFORTS AND INFLATED NUMBERS

His says he is a seasoned business man with lots of know how and stated that he had converted $1 million dollar deficit into a surplus and replaced a city's dysfunctional staff. Yet his city's administrator Bill Lewis at the time, who was part of that dysfunctional staff that Mendoza continually mentions, has publicly stated that the staff Mendoza has defined as dysfunctional left under good terms and it was their decisions to leave. He says that Mendoza even offered him a four year contract extension. Lewis stated in a local newspaper that the $1 million was a turn around due to the change in the economy, not anything Mendoza did. Also that number is inflated, it was more like $600,000. So taking credit on falsehoods is also another concern that the committee felt it needed to address.

HE ADMITTED SEVERAL TIMES IN PUBLIC THAT HE WILL BE INEFFECTIVE IN SACRAMENTO

We need a solid voice and representative in Sacramento. Not someone who offers fear and no solutions. Who gives up before he gets started. He has publicly admitted that he will be unable to pass legislation in Sacramento because of the opposition party's majority. His inability to cross the aisle is evident by his statements. As a Latino political organization we expect elected officials, Latino or other, to meet a standard that represents all constituencies and in doing so does not ignore or hurt the Latino community in general. In fact our ideal candidate would offer a voice to our county Latino population who have not had adequate access to a representative in the assembly.

NOT A REPRESENTATIVE OF OUR COMMUNITY. NOT SUITABLE FOR THE ASSEMBLY

His platform is clear, he will not work for our constituency or offer solutions. If elected and being Latino would be a misrepresentation of our community specifically. Whether he'd want it or not, he will be speaking on our behalf as well as the district. This organization wants to make it clear that he does not represent Latinos, he represents other interests and so L-PAC firmly stands behind a "No" recommendation for Rudy Mendoza for State Assembly.

Mendoza Responds

I am almost as proud of the endorsements I have not received as the endorsements I have received. Sheriff Bill Wittman, Sheriff Mike Boudreaux, District Attorney Tim Ward, Assemblywoman Connie Conway, Congressman Devin Nunes and almost all of the elected Latino officials in this district have endorsed me because they know I share their values and beliefs and I will be a strong and loud voice in Sacramento to represent this area. I've proven with my service in the City of Woodlake that government can work effectively and efficiently. I stand by my previous statements that we turned around a dysfunctional administration, turned a million dollar deficit into a surplus, strengthened public safety, built a wastewater treatment facility and revitalized the downtown area without raising taxes. Those are verifiable facts. The beauty of telling the truth is that you never have to look back. My record in business and my record as Mayor of the City of Woodlake speak for themselves as do the community leaders who have chosen to endorse me.

Rudy Mendoza

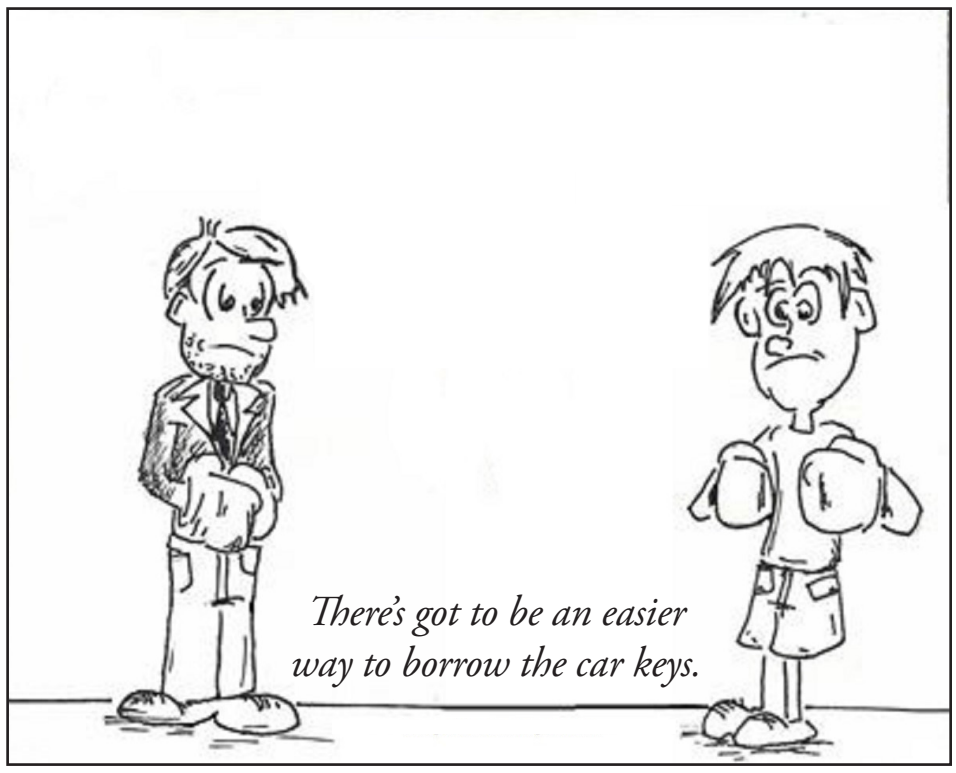
Like us on Facebook
View and like us at fb.me/ourvalleyvoice
Follow us on Twitter
@ourvalleyvoice

Send us your Letters to the Editor

By mail:
208 W. Main, Ste. E, Visalia, CA 93291
By email:
editor@ourvalleyvoice.com

Black Tie

Alex Oldenbourg



Lemoore Chamber Applauds Navy Final Decision

On Thursday, October 2, 2014, the United States Navy announced their final decision regarding the homebasing of F-35C aircraft intended to replace aging Navy Pacific Fleet FA-18 Hornet aircraft.

According to the Navy's Record of Decision, "After carefully weighing the strategic, operational, and environmental consequences of the proposed action, (the Department of the Navy) announces its decision to provide facilities and functions to support homebasing of F-35C aircraft at Naval Air Station (NAS) Lemoore."

Beginning in 2016, a total of 100 F-35C aircraft (seven Navy Pacific Fleet Squadrons and one Fleet Replacement Squadron) will be homebased at NAS Lemoore, replacing 70 aging FA-18 Hornet aircraft. The homebasing of the F-35 aircraft will make NAS Lemoore a significant source of the Navy's strike power in the Pacific and enable our region to play a significant role in our nation's defense for years to come.

The Lemoore Chamber of Commerce is incredibly pleased to hear the decision has been finally made, and wish to congratulate NAS Lemoore on acquiring the new fleet. This decision not only impacts our Navy community, but it will also be a benefit to our greater community. Congressman David Valadao stated in a recent press release, "The basing of the F-35C fleet is estimated to require 751 new military and contractor personnel for mission support. With an estimated $36.5 million in annual payroll, this will inject much needed economic stimulus into our suffering region."

We look forward to welcoming the F-35C fleet to Lemoore!

Jenny MacMurdo, CEO
Lemoore Chamber of Commerce

Online Comments

Comment at ourvalleyvoice.com or fb.me/ourvalleyvoice

"I believe Devin [sic] would be my best choice for the assembly because when I talked to Rudy I could never get a truthful answer to my questions."

— JOHN EPSTIEN on Political Fix (2 October, 2014)

"I have to disagree with Mr. Epstien, WHY?????? Candidate for the 26th State Assembly (Devon Mathis) being from Porterville has yet to address Porterville Chief of Police Chuck McMillian's placement on Administrative Leave(the allegations aren't pretty, I mean if the people only knew??). If Mr. Mathis cared about the people he is wanting to represent, he should have addressed the issue by now, since it is alleged that the abuse of power affects the whole community. But he is not alone, because following his disconcern, is Incumbant 5th District Supervisor Mike Ennis, who shows a lack of respect to his constitutes by not returning phone calls (turn in the taxpayers phone "Mikey", use or lose it). Mikey also ignored details as to the Tulare County Grand Jury investigation of 2012, regarding the corruption within the Porterville City Government which included the Police Department, and not to let her off the hook, how about it Mrs. Gurolla can you represent the district better than "use it, or lose it Mikey"????. Mrs. Gurolla show the voters what you're all about and do the right thing this time, don't be a follower, be a strong Latina and demonstrate your effectiveness. Please remember that I brought it to your attention, that if you wanted voter support, to do the right thing, when it came to the appointment of Council Reyes, and that was to have appointed the third highest vote getter, Matt Green. Coming from the Latino community the candidates have to demonstrate their strength in attacking and solving issues, rather than showing "love" to one another. Rudy Mendoza will have my family, relatives, and friend's vote on November 4th. For all the others you have 22 days to demonstrate to the Voters why you DESEREVE their VOTE, starting with addressing the Chief's abuse of power, who knew, when did they know it, and why did they condone it."

— John Duran on Political Fix (2 October, 2014)

Cadet Agustin Basilio (left) signs a greeting to cadet Juan DeOchoa, who is deaf. The cadets are part of a new American Sign Language class at La Sierra Military Academy.

La Sierra Cadets Develop Sign Language Skills

Staff Reports

Cadets at La Sierra Military Academy (LSMA) are learning a new way to communicate with their classmate, Juan DeOchoa. Through the use of American Sign Language (ASL), students are just beginning to acquire the skills to interact with Juan, a deaf student who joined LSMA last year.

Juan's interpreter, Kym King, volunteered to organize an ASL class for the school with the hope that students would interact socially with Juan. While most still lack the confidence to converse with Juan outside the ASL classroom, King encourages them to do so. Cadet Agustin Basilio said that he was surprised to learn that ASL used signs to represent words or phrases instead of spelling each word with the ASL manual alphabet.

"It's easier than I thought it was going to be," he said.

The class has inspired some students, including cadet Roxana Garcia, who shared that she has begun thinking about incorporating ASL into her career plans after high school.

King uses Juan as an instructor in her class to encourage interaction between the students. One morning last month, cadets gathered in the parking lot to review outdoor directions and objects. Cadets responded to Juan's questions with appropriate signs as he pointed to grass, trees, rocks, windows and doors.

Toward the end of their class, students shared their plans to conduct a fundraiser. The purpose of the fundraiser is to attend a social meeting of the South Valley Deaf and Hard of Hearing Service Center. The group is planning a trip to one of the Visalia Me-n-Ed's Pizza Restaurants, which the cadets hope to attend. In this setting, cadets will gain valuable ASL experience conversing with people who have a variety of skill levels. In order to prepare them for this experience, King announced that this month she and the cadets are, "going to turn off our voices. We are going to conduct our classes in sign or by writing – whatever it takes," she said with a big smile.

For more information on the La Sierra Military Academy and its student activities, call Administrator Anjelica Zermeño at 733-6963.

VUSD to Celebrate Groundbreaking of New Middle School on October 23

Staff Reports

The first new middle school to be built Visalia in 20 years will get underway with a ceremonial groundbreaking at 10am on Thursday, October 23.

The new school is made possible by Measure E, the bond approved by voters in November 2012. It will be located on the northwest section of Riggin Avenue and Akers Street. The architect is SIM Architects of Fresno and the general contractor is Oral E. Micham, Inc., of Woodlake.

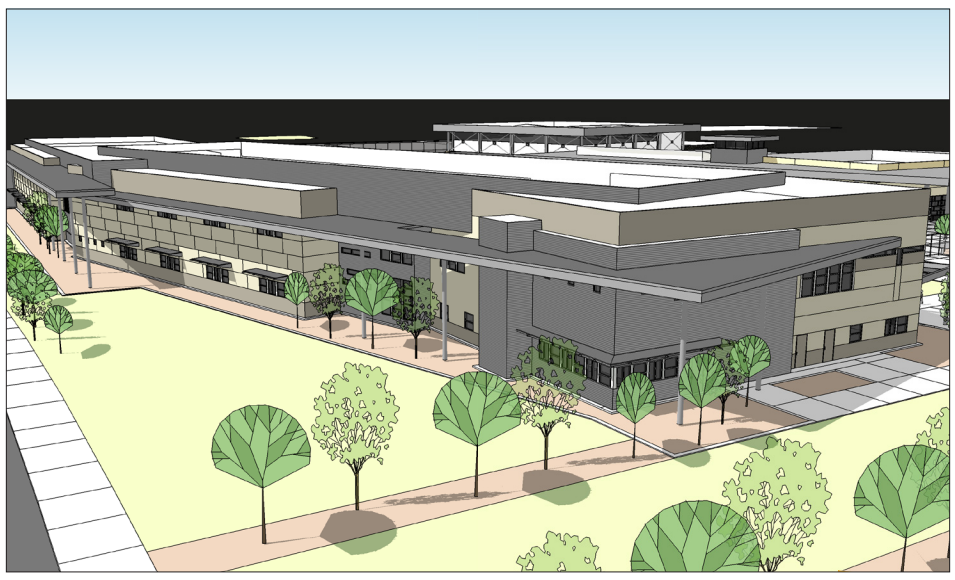
The design reflects input from families and teachers during a series of meetings last year. The campus will include 24 classrooms in a two-story design; five science labs; a food court and snack bar; a large stage for performing arts; a large central kitchen; a band room and a choir room; a gym with seating for 1,170 people; baseball, softball and soccer fields; and basketball courts.

The school will also have a tech lab with a robotics area and broadcast studio, and art labs with a kiln. The library will feature a computer lab.

Visalia Unified School District's four middle schools are at capacity, so the district recently created a new program that allows seventh and eighth-graders to remain at their elementary school campus rather than moving on to a middle school. However, the current and anticipated student population necessitated a new middle school, explained Craig Wheaton, Ed.D., VUSD superintendent.

"The new middle school was a key component of the need for a school bond, and the residents of Visalia Unified School District supported it with their vote," Wheaton added. "This campus consumes a significant portion of Measure E revenues, so we took the time to find ways to meet the needs of students and teachers, while being extremely mindful of the construction cost."

The public is invited to the groundbreaking ceremony. The school will open for the 2016 school year.



The new middle school in Visalia is expected to open in 2016.

Valley Voice
Valley Scene

Springville Apple Festival Set for October 18-19

Staff Reports

The 34th Annual Springville Apple Festival, sponsored by the Springville Community Club, is scheduled for Saturday, October 18, and Sunday, October 19 in downtown Springville.

The festival, which attracts more than 20,000 guests each year, features over 200 booths, encompassing handcrafted, hand-embellished arts and crafts items, and a wide variety of foods. Entertainment includes music, kids' games, carnival-type rides and clowns.

Festival activities also include the Apple Run 5K, 10K and kids' runs, plus the two-mile walk on Saturday morning, and the Annual Fat Tire Classic Mountain Bike Race on Sunday morning. The Fat Tire Classic is a challenging and scenic seven-mile mountain ride for adults, with a well-supervised and easier course for children.

Free parking is available at the Rodeo Grounds, with free shuttle service compliments of Eagle Mountain Casino, to and from the downtown area.

For more information, call 202-6904.

Eagle Mountain Casino Presents 'Price Is Right' Live Stage Show

Eagle Mountain Casino will present "The Price is Right" live stage show, where audience members can win a chance to spin the Big Wheel, play Plinko and win prizes just like on the popular TV game show. Shows are scheduled for 2pm and 8pm on November 1.

Tickets are $35 for general admission or $45 for reserved, and are available at www.eaglemtncasino.com or in the casino gift shop. All guests attending the show will be required to attend registration and present a valid ID for a chance to be in contestant row. Registration begins three hours prior to the start of each show.

Eagle Mountain Casino is a full service casino owned and operated by the Tule River Tribe. It features 1,200 slot machines and nine table games.

Clarence Ritchie Ranch Rodeo Set for October 24-26

The Clarence Ritchie Ranch Rodeo will be held on October 24-26 at the Woodlake Lions Rodeo Grounds.

Friday events include jackpot roping at 6pm. Saturday and Sunday highlights include steer stopping, sort & rope, muley roping, team penning, ribbon roping, barrel racing, and ranch bronc and bull riding. In addition to rodeo competition there will be a dance on Saturday.

For the past 59 years, the rodeo has been the major event for the Woodlake Lions Club. This event has enabled the Woodlake Lions to donate thousands of dollars to support activities, events and programs in the community.

The Woodlake Lions provide substantial payments for facility use and cash each year to the community, while maintaining the grandstands, buildings, pens and other rodeo facilities for use by other organizations.

For more information, call Shad Lawrence at 816-9002 or Kyle Locket at 250-1062, or visit www.woodlakelionsrodeo.org.

Dia de Los Muertos Event to Celebrate Life

Staff Reports

Dia de Los Muertos will be celebrated at Garden Plaza on Main Street in Visalia on Saturday, October 25. This celebration of life, which will begin with a traditional Aztec blessing, is about remembering the lives of loved ones and honoring ancestors. It's about the cycle of life and learning not to be afraid of death.

Dia de Los Muertos is traditionally celebrated November 1 for the innocent (children), and November 2 for adults. Altars are built by community members and family members, most holding to tradition with a photo of the honoree, their favorite food, water, candles, marigold flowers, an arch and incense. This is believed to help the spirit of the deceased find their way back for the annual visit.

Dia de Los Muertos is presented by the Tulare County League of Mexican-American Women, a nonprofit organization celebrating 35 years of community involvement, including awarding more than $250,000 in scholarships to Tulare County students.

Entertainment will be provided by local Folklorico dance groups, a guitar group and other local talent. The event will also feature food vendors and arts and crafts booths, many with the theme of the day. There will be a children's free art booth and face painting.

The event starts at 11am and ends at 4pm. For more information, call Chairperson Virginia Arenas at 909-3411.

Visalia Players to Perform 'Respect' at Fox Theatre

"Respect: A Musical Journey of Women" was the most successful show of the Visalia Players' 2013-14 season – a complete sellout at the Ice House Theatre. Now the community theater has expanded the show and will present it as a special fundraiser at the Visalia Fox Theatre at 7:30pm on Saturday, October 25.

Karen Simpson, Susan Mathews and Marla Alberstein perform "Take Another Little Piece of My Heart" in "Respect."

The show combines excerpts from 60 songs with women's own stories over the decades about finding dreams, creating relationships and gaining independence. The performers are Marla Alberstein, Susan Mathews, Samantha Muse, Jenny Ponce, Karen Simpson and Ronnette Torrence.

Vanderbilt professor Dr. Dorothy Marcic created the show based on her book, *Respect: Women and Popular Music*, where she analyzed all Top 40 female song lyrics since 1900. She found that early songs depicted neediness and dependency with such songs as "Someone to Watch over Me" and "Where the Boys Are." Later in the century, songs such as "I Am Woman" and "I Will Survive" were more prevalent.

"We chose this show as our big fundraiser because it has such a powerful message about women's strength, without male bashing," said director Leeni Mitchell, who had many conversations with the author through email. "We wanted to make sure that it was not seen as a 'chick flick.' Dorothy did not write it to be an indictment of men, but rather to document the changes in the roles of women throughout the 20th century. By using Top 40s music that so many of us know and remember, it becomes a piece of nostalgia as well as a powerful statement."

Theatergoers can choose from three kinds of tickets. Reserved seating is $25. VIP seating for $60 includes a 6pm preshow with gourmet appetizers and spirits at Tazzaria. Dinner tickets are $100 and include premium seating and dinner with wine at 5:30pm at Café 225.

Reserved and VIP tickets are available at the Fox Theatre, 308 W. Main, 625-1369 or www.foxvisalia.org. For dinner tickets, call Susan Mathews at 739-1449.

Proceeds will benefit the Ice House Theatre and Family Services of Tulare County.

"Virgin" John Kay, Jim Kliegl as Senex, Jake Lomeli as Hero, and "Virgin" Alli Smith.

Lindsay Theater Presents 'A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum'

"A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum" is coming to the Lindsay Theater for seven performances.

The musical is set in ancient Rome on a street with three houses. In the center is the house of Senex (Jim Kliegl), who lives there with wife, Domina (Sara Zanini), son Hero (Jake Lomeli), and several slaves, including slave-in-chief Hysterium (John Kay) and the musical's main character Pseudolus (Chris Shepard). One of the neighboring houses is owned by Marcus Lycus (George Pearce), who is a buyer and seller of beautiful women; the other belongs to the ancient Erronius (Jip Woudstra), who has been abroad for 20 years, searching for his long-lost children stolen in infancy by pirates.

While Senex and Domina are away on a trip, Hero spies the lovely Philia (Alli Smith), a courtesan in the House of Lycus, and falls madly in love. Pseudolus promises to help Hero win Philia's love in exchange for his own freedom. Unfortunately, Philia has been sold to the renowned warrior Miles Gloriosus (TJ Hurt), who is expected to claim her very soon.

Pseudolus tells Lycus that the girl is suffering from the plague and offers to place her in Senex's house until the captain arrives. Thus he is able to give Philia and Hero some time alone together, and the two fall in love. After many more twists and turns in the plot, the story comes to a fanciful but happy conclusion.

Performances start on Thursday, October 16, at 7:30pm. Other performances are October 17, 18, 24 and 25 at 7:30pm, and October 19 at 2pm. Because of some adult themes, this play is not recommended for young children.

Tickets are $15 for adults and $10 for students, and are available online at lindsaycommunitytheater.com and at the door on performance nights.

Red Ribbon Week features local dance groups.

Red Ribbon Week Celebration to Promote Healthy Lifestyles

For the fifth consecutive year, the CHOICES Prevention Programs and the Tulare County Health and Human Services Agency are partnering to host the county's largest Red Ribbon Week (RRW) event. The event will be held October 25 at the International Agri-Center Building C in Tulare from noon until 4pm.

"Over the years as the event has grown, so has the support of local organizations and school districts," said Al Rodriguez, event chairman. "This year, several principals and superintendents have committed to bringing buses of students and families to the event, which tells us something about the impact this project is having on our communities."

The theme of the 2014 Red Ribbon Week Celebration is "Love Yourself – Be Happy, Be Healthy, Be Drug Free," and organizers hope to deliver this message throughout the event.

"Our goal is to showcase positive alternatives to alcohol, tobacco and other drugs," said Rodriguez. "We also want to promote all aspects of health and wellness in a fun and entertaining environment."

Featuring health screenings, hands-on science activities, youth performances, community resource booths, and a blood drive, RRW 2014 will have something for everyone. From local singers and dancers to martial arts competitors and military cadets, the celebration will highlight the wide variety of clubs, sports and organizations in Tulare County that promote healthy lifestyles.

"Our hope is that students and families will discover ways to make positive choices and stay drug free, not just for a week, but for a lifetime," said Rodriguez.

For more information about RRW 2014, contact Al Rodriguez at alr@tcoe.org or 651-0155.

Visalia Parks & Recreation Department to Celebrate 75 Years on November 1

Staff Reports

Established in November 1939, the Visalia Parks & Recreation Department will mark its 75th anniversary with a celebration at Plaza Park in Visalia.

"In true recreation fashion, we're planning a large community event on Saturday, November 1," said Jeannie Greenwood, manager of the Visalia Parks & Recreation Department. "This event will feature a car show, carnival rides, live entertainment and much, much more. We anticipate over 3,000 community members will be joining us in the celebration."

Kicking off at 10am, the event also features a petting zoo, scarecrow contest, special kids' stage, food, and commercial and informational booths. Applications are currently being accepted for organizations and agencies that want to participate.

"We are actively seeking agencies in the community to be a part of this celebration," added Greenwood. "They can host a game booth, run a food booth or host an informational booth. It's a great fundraising and outreach opportunity."

The celebration, which will run until 10pm, is free to attend and open to community members of all ages. Some activity fees may apply. Visit www.liveandplayvisalia.com and click on "Celebrating Our Heritage" for details on this event. Online you'll find sponsorship opportunities, car show and vendor applications, information on the scarecrow contest and event schedules.

For more information, contact the City of Visalia Parks & Recreation Department at 713-4365 or recreation@liveandplayvisalia.com.

'Adopt a Musician' at Symphony Concert

If you come to the Tulare County Symphony concert on Saturday, October 18, you can adopt a musician. As a fundraiser and recognition for the musicians, the symphony has hosted an "Adopt a Musician" program for the last three years. All the musicians were adopted in the first two years, and half have already been adopted this season.

The Adopt a Musician bulletin board will be in the lobby at each concert, so patrons can choose the person they want to adopt. Adoptions are $100 for musicians and $300 for music director Bruce Kiesling.

Adoptors receive a lanyard with a picture of their musician on it and are invited to a special reception to meet their adoptee.

The first classics concert of the season is October 18 at 7:30pm at the Visalia Fox Theatre. The orchestra will perform two favorites, Gershwin's "An American in Paris" and Bernstein's Symphonic Dances from "West Side Story."

Tickets are available at 732-8600 or www.tularecountysymphony.com.

AAUW Book Sale Begins October 16

The American Association of University Women will host its semi-annual book sale starting on October 16. The one-week sale at the Sequoia Mall in Visalia runs through Thursday, October 23. Hours are 10am to 8:30pm weekdays, 10am to 7pm on Saturday, and 11am to 6pm Sunday.

All hardbacks are sold for $2, while paperbacks go for $1. CDs, DVDs, books on tape and old records are also available. All of the money raised goes toward scholarships for local students. Unless it's a popular old classic, any yellowed or torn books are donated to a prison program or recycled.

For more information, call Elaine Smith at 734-4780.

The First Baptist Church of Dinuba will present an evening of "Southern Gospel" music featuring The Chordsmen on Sunday, October 19, beginning at 6pm. The church is located at 600 E. Nebraska Ave. in Dinuba, and admission is free. (There will be a free-will offering taken for the ministry of The Chordsmen.)

John Mark McMillan

John Mark McMillan to Perform an 'Evening of Worship' at Oval Park

John Mark McMillan will headline the free Christian Music Concert sponsored by Visalia Rescue Mission at Oval Park in Visalia at 6pm on Thursday, October 23.

A singer-songwriter as interested in musical exploration as lyrical exploration, McMillan carved his own path from the outset, with an ear for melody and a poet's eye for metaphor. No topic was off-limits: death and love; isolation and exultation; restlessness and silence. And always consistent—an ongoing dialogue with God, ever-wrestling for some kind of blessing, and usually at volumes most suited for rock clubs.

Ryan Stillwater, Visalia Rescue Mission's Oval Park coordinator, first met McMillan in 2008 during the fundraising tour, Rock for Water, which raised money to dig a well in what is now South Sudan.

"John Mark was and still is one of the only Christian artists I enjoy listening to," said Stillwater. "Our culture craves the authentic and John Mark meets that desire in the realm of worship and the Christian-music genre."

McMillan's connection of worship and genuine expression prompted Stillwater to host him at Oval Park as part of the Visalia Rescue Mission's efforts to change the perception and dynamic of the Park in the neighborhood.

"This event is a call to action to the faith-community in Visalia, as this community specifically understands that we don't wrestle with flesh and blood, but with something else, something unseen," said Stillwater. "The problems of hunger, homelessness and addiction are just symptoms of something else. They're the branches stemming from bad roots. This time of worship with John Mark will be spent glorifying God in song and believing Him to change lives, change families, and ultimately change this neighborhood."

For more information, visit ovalpark.org.

Considered a Tejano music legend, Little Joe & La Familia will perform at the Visalia Convention Center on Sunday, October 19. The two-time Grammy nominee received the Best Mexican-American Performance Grammy for "Dies y Seis De Septiembre" in 1991. In 1996, Little Joe performed on the 1997 Grammy-nominated album *Frank Yanovich and Friends, Songs of the Polka King: Vol. 1*, for which he performed a duet with Yanovich on the song "Just Because/Si Porque." Tickets for the 7:30pm concert are $30.

Heavy Metal Bands to Headline Visalia Fox Theatre Benefit

"Heavy Metal Halloween," a Light Up the Fox Benefit on Thursday, October 30, will feature Dawning of a Massacre, Saturn Descends, Summon the Harbinger and Silent Uprising.

Dawning of a Massacre was formed in 2011 by Nicolas Gardner and Nate Sizemore, former members of Struggle Through Apathy. They were later joined by George Longoria, Jimmie Dunlap and Alex Serrato. The band has played countless shows around the Central Valley — many of them being fundraisers for various causes, including radio stations and money for funeral costs. The band members hail from Visalia and have a wide range of influences that shape their sound. After losing Nate Sizemore this summer, the band added Rudy Vargas as lead vocalist. They are currently working on a new EP and have an Indiegogo campaign to help raise funds.

Saturn Descends is a four-piece alternative metal band also based in Visalia. The band features ex-members of Falls in Ruins and Hostile. Their unique sound includes ripping solos and clean vocals.

Summon the Harbinger is five-piece band that hails out of Central California that plays some very interesting Djent-style metal. They combine ambient guitar riffs with some crushing poly-style breakdowns.

Formed in 2012, Silent Uprising is a metal band from Hanford, experimenting with the sounds of thrash and melodic death metal. Their line-up was solidified in late 2013, and although they don't have any albums to date, they plan to release one sometime this year.

Tickets for the 7pm show are $13. For tickets or more information, call 625-1369 or visit foxvisalia.org.

The Cellar Door Prepares for October 24th 'Jailbreak!'

Fresno's Jailbreak!, which headlines The Cellar Door in Downtown Visalia on Friday, October 24, is a four-member jailhouse rock n' roll band featuring Hightone Daddy singing and playing rhythm guitar, Arsen Roulette unleashing lead guitar licks, Sonny Vincent charming the upright bass, and Scotty Coon feverishly pounding drums.

Opening the show will be Fresno veteran revved-up rockabilly band Cattie Ness & the Revenge. Dee Jay Tucker Boy will spin real '50s rock and rockabilly vinyl all night long between sets.

Tickets for the 9:30pm 21+ show are $7.

559-732-8611

THE Southern Pacific DEPOT RESTAURANT

207 East Oak Avenue
Visalia, California 93291

WEEKDAYS
Lunch: 11:30am - 2:00pm
Dinner: 5:30pm - 10:00pm
Bar: 11:30am - Close

SATURDAY
Lunch: 11:30am - 2:00pm
Dinner: 5:30pm - 10:00pm
Bar: 4:00pm - Close

RESERVATIONS: www.depotvisalia.com

HAND-BREADED
CHICKEN TENDERS

Follow us: /awrestaurants @awrestaurants
Visit us at www.awrestaurants.com
A&W ALL AMERICAN FOOD

VISIT OUR SEVEN SOUTH VALLEY LOCATIONS!
VISALIA: 2124 W. Riggin • 301 N. Willis • 2611 S. Mooney
TULARE: 133 N. "J" Street • EXETER: 420 N. Kaweah
HANFORD: 1113 N. 10th Ave • 1675 W. Lacey Blvd. (inside Hanford Mall)

MUSIC

Oct. 16 – Annette Ash Band and the Muzikmeisters – 8pm
Annette Ash Band will perform at Crawdaddy's Visalia, 333 E. Main St.

Oct. 17 – Spanspek Music and Arts Festival – 5:30pm
Strange Vine, Patric Contreras, Catharsus, Slow Season, Planets Live in House, Roach Collection, Santa Mira and Macondo are among the performers at Orosi Memorial Hall, 41645 Road 128, Orosi. For information, visit spanspekfestival.com.

Oct. 17 – Karaoke – 6:30-8:30pm
On the Third Friday of each month, Karaoke is featured at 210 Cafe. For information, call 739-9009.

Oct. 17 – Experience Hendrix 2014 Tour – 7:30pm
The music and legacy of Jimi Hendrix will be celebrated at Tachi Palace. Tickets, $25-$75, are available at tachipalace.com.

Oct. 17 – Britain's Finest – 9pm
Billed as "The Most Realistic Beatles Tribute Band in Existence!" Britain's Finest will perform at The Cellar Door, 101 W. Main St. Tickets for the 21+ show are $10. For information, visit snvfoundation.org.

Oct. 18 – Tastemakers Festival – 1-6pm
Culture 5 and Sound N Vision present the Tastemakers Festival featuring Nick Waterhouse at the Visalia Recreation Ballpark. Also performing will be Strange Vine, Mezcal and Taco Wagon. Tickets, $25, available at ticketweb.com.

Oct. 18 – Adrian Brannan – 7pm
Adrian "Buckaroogirl" Brannan will perform at Mavericks Coffee House, 238 E. Caldwell Ave., Visalia. Tickets are $25. Seating is limited. For information, visit mavericksscoffeehouse.com.

Oct. 18 – Philharmonic Dances - 7:30pm
Tulare County Symphony will open the season with the splashy and energetic rhythms of the "Symphonic Dances" from Bernstein's classic "West Side Story" in a pairing with Rachmaninoff's own "Symphonic Dances," his autobiographical tour de force. Tickets are $30 to $39.50 at the symphony office, 208 W. Main St., Suite D, Visalia, downstairs in Montgomery Square. Student prices are $10. Tickets are also available by calling 732-8600 or online at www.tularecountysymphony.com.

Oct. 19 – The Chordsmen – 6pm
An evening of Southern Gospel music featuring the Chordsmen Quartet will be featured at First Baptist Church of Dinuba, 600 E. Nebraska Ave. The program is free. An offering will be taken for the ministry of the Chordsmen.

Oct. 19 – Little Joe y La Familia – 7:30pm
SAM for Congress presents this Tejano music legend at Visalia Convention Center. Tickets, $30, available by calling 972-1162.

Oct. 19 – 2nd Annual Menudo Festival - 7:30pm
The legendary Latin band Malo will headline this event at the Visalia Convention Center. Malo is recognized for their Latin flavor and influence in music through the last four decades. For more information on tickets or vendor information, visit www.nuestrotiempo.net or contact event chair Raymond Macareno at raymond@nuestrotiempo.net

Oct. 23 – Evening of Worship with John Mark McMillan – 6pm
A Christian Music Concert will be held at Oval Park. For information, visit ovalpark.org.

Oct. 24 – Jailbreak – 9:30pm
Sound n' Vision Foundation will present Jailbreak, Cattie Ness & the Revenge and Dee Jay Tucker Boy at The Cellar Door, 101 W. Main St. Tickets for the 21+ concert are $7. For information, visit snvfoundation.org.

Oct. 25 – Doc's Holiday (CD Release Party) – 8-10pm
Sound n' Vision Foundation will present Doc's Holiday CD Release Party and Stryder Callison at The Cellar Door, 101 W. Main St. Tickets for the 21+ concert are $10 and include a free CD. For information, visit snvfoundation.org.

Oct. 30 – 'Light Up the Fox' Benefit: Heavy Metal Halloween – 7pm
Dawning of a Massacre, Saturn Descends, Summon the Harbinger, and Silent Uprising perform at the Visalia Fox Theatre. Tickets, $13, available at foxvisalia.org.

Oct. 31 – Catharsus – 9:30pm
Sound n' Vision Foundation will present Catharsus, Children in Heat (A Tribute to the Misfits) and Saturn Descends at The Cellar Door, 101 W. Main St. Tickets for the 21+ concert are $5. For information, visit snvfoundation.org.

Nov. 8 – Visalia Concerts in the Park – 3-5pm
Five Live will perform at Lions Park as part of Visalia's Concert in the Park Series. The events are free. For information, call 713-4365.

Nov. 8 – Cheers Elephant– 8-10pm
Sound n' Vision Foundation will present Cheers Elephant and foot of feathers at The Cellar Door, 101 W. Main St. Tickets for the 21+ concert are $5. For information, visit snvfoundation.org.

Nov. 14 – Twin Peaks – 7-9pm
Twin Peaks will perform with special guests at the Cellar Door, 101 W. Main St., Visalia. Tickets, $7, available at Ticketweb.com.

Nov. 15 – A Night of Mariachi – 6:30-9:30pm
Sound N Vision and the Visalia Opera Company present Noche de Bohemia featuring Mariachi Azul de Acero at The Cellar Door, 101 W. Main St. Tickets ($12) are available at Ticketweb.com. All ages welcome.

Nov. 15 – Katy Moffatt – 7pm
Katy Moffatt will perform at the Mavericks Coffee House in Visalia. Tickets are $25. Doors open at 6pm for this limited seating

EVENTS

Through Oct. 24 – Three Rivers Raven Festival
A month of activities is planned in Three Rivers to celebrate ravens including art shows, speakers, bike contests, writing contests, fun run and carnival. For information, visit facebook.com/threerivers.arts.

October 16-18 – 21st Annual Southwest Contractors Trophy Cup – 10am
The premier sprint car showcase on the west coast will be held at Thunderbowl Raceway at the Tulare County Fairgrounds. For information, visit www.trophycup.org.

Oct. 16 – 2014 Candidate Forum – 5:30
Candidates for the 25th Assembly, Rudy Mendoza and Devon Mathis, will be featured at a forum at The Vintage Press, 216 N. Willis, Visalia. For information, contact vypn@visaliachamber.org.

Oct. 16 – Norman Sharrer Symposium – 6:30-8pm
Kaweah Delta will host the annual Norman Sharrer Symposium at the Visalia Fox. Dr. Victoria Sweet, author of *God's Hotel: a Doctor, a Hospital, and a Pilgrimage to the Heart of Medicine*, will speak. Admission is free. For information, call 624-5985.

Oct. 17 – KCFB Annual Gala – 6pm
The Kings County Farm Bureau will hold its annual gala at the Kings Fairgrounds, Olympic Room. Tickets are $100 and can be purchased from any KCFB board member or from the office, 870 Greenfield Ave. in Hanford, or online at kcfb.org/gala.

Oct. 17 – Witches Night Out – 6-9pm
Main Street Hanford and The Sentinel will host a ladies shopping night. Twenty downtown businesses will extend their hours. Tickets are $10. For information, call 582-9457.

Oct. 17 – People, the Environment, and the Archaeology of Lost Civilizations – 7-8pm
Dr. Robert Simpkins, anthropology professor will discuss examples of lost civilizations in the Porterville College Theater. Admission is free. For information, visit www.portervillecollege.edu.

Oct. 18-19 – Springville Apple Festival
The 31st Annual Apple Festival sponsored by the Springville Community Club features over 200 craft booths selling handmade arts and crafts. Also included are the Apple Run 5K, 10K, and kid's runs and the Annual Fat Tire Classic mountain bike race. For information, visit springville.ocsnet.net/applefest.

Oct. 18 – 2014 Justice Run
District Attorney Tim Ward will host the 4th Annual Justice Run: 5k Race/1 Mile Walk at Mooney Grove Park, as part of Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Registration is $30 and forms can be downloaded from www.da-tulareco.org/justicerun.htm.

Oct. 18 – 4th Annual Derrick Shaw Memorial Skate Competition – 10am-2pm
The Visalia Parks and Recreation Department will host a skateboarding competition at Provident Skate Park. For information, call 713-4365.

Oct. 18 – Tulare Community Health 12th Annual Health Fair – 1-4pm
Free flu shots, informational booths, health screenings, music, games, bike raffles and more are featured at Healthy Harvest Carnival at 1101 N. Cherry St., Tulare.

Oct. 18 – Saturday Night Live Veterans – 7pm
Five veterans of Saturday Night Live will perform at Eagle Mountain Casino in Porterville. Tickets are $40 General Admission, $55 reserved. Must be 18+ to attend. For information, visit eaglemtncasino.com.

Oct. 19 – 2nd Annual Menudo Festival – 9am-3pm
The Tulare County League of Mexican American Women will host the Festival at the Visalia Convention Center. For information, visit www.nuestrotiempo.net.

Oct. 20 – Voter Registration Deadline
The last day to register to vote in the upcoming Nov. 4 General Election is Oct. 20. To register online, visit www.sos.ca.gov. For information on the ballot initiatives and candidates, visit smartvoter.org.

Oct. 21 – Leadership and Keys to Effective Employee Relationship Management – 11am-1pm
The Society for Human Resource Management of Tulare/Kings County will meet at the Visalia Holiday Inn featuring Mike Letizia, PHR-CA, Cal SHRM State Director and President of Letizia HR Solutions. For information, visit shrmtularekings.org.

Oct. 21 – League of Women Voters of Tulare County meeting – 11:45am
A presentation and discussion on the ballot measures for the General Election will be given in Sue Sa's Club House, 699 W. Center, Visalia. Cost is $13. No reservations are needed. For information, call 734-6501.

Oct. 22 – Sexual Harassment Prevention Training – 7:30-10am
The Visalia Chamber of Commerce and Pacific Employers present this workshop at Lamp Liter Inn, 3300 W. Mineral King Ave. For reservations, visit visaliachamber.org.

Oct. 23 - Blues Ribbon Cutting – 10-11am
Exeter Chamber of Commerce will hold a ribbon cutting for Blues at 134 South C Street. The shop is under new management. For information, call 592-2919.

Oct. 23 – VUSD New Middle School Groundbreaking Ceremony – 10am
A short program and light refreshments will be available at the Visalia Unified School District groundbreaking 1/4 mile north of Riggin on Akers.

Oct. 24-25 – Annual Dirt Nationals
IMCA Modifieds and IMCA Stock Cars compete at the annual Dirt Nationals at Thunderbowl Raceway at the Tulare County Fairgrounds. For information, visit www.thunderbowlraceway.com.

EVENT CALENDAR

Oct. 24-26 – Memorial Ranch Rodeo
Woodlake Lions will present the Clarence Richie Memorial Ranch Rodeo at the Woodlake Lions Rodeo Grounds. There will be a dance on Saturday. For information and event signups, call 816-9002 or 250-1062.

Oct. 24 – 15th Annual Bob Cary Memorial Golf Tournament and Crab Feed – 10:30am-7pm
The Visalia Breakfast Rotary Club will hold a 4-person scramble golf tournament. Funds raised go towards the creation of Heart Safe Community in Tulare County. For information, call 799-8073.

Oct. 24 – Micro Sprints - 5pm
Microsprint racing will be held at Lemoore Raceway, 1750 Hwy 41. For information, visit lemooreraceway.com.

Oct. 25 - Exeter Hobbies Fall Classic Race – 6am
More than 150 racers from around the state are expected to compete at the new indoor track at Exeter Hobbies, 130 E. Maple St. Exeter. BBQ will be served for lunch and dinner. For information, call 592-4880.

Oct. 25 – Walk n Roll for Spina Bifida
DJ, face painting, cheerleaders, arts and crafts, lawn games, competitions, prizes and barbecue featured at this fundraiser for Spina Bifida Association of California at Del Lago Park in Tulare. For information, call 679-4502.

Oct. 25 – Spooky Sprint – 7am
The Sixth Annual 5K Run/Walk & Kids Fun Run includes a costume contest, refreshments and awards. For information, email recreation@liveandplayvisalia.com. Register online at tinyurl.com/odqmle2.

Oct. 25 – Womens Tackle Foodball Tryouts – 11am
Women's Professional Football team Central Cal War Angels will hold tryouts at Goshen Park, Riggins and Hwy 99. Previous experience not required. For information, visit warangelsfootball.com.

Oct. 25 – Harvest Festival – 12-10pm
The International Agri-center will host live music, local products, family activities and food to celebrate the Central Valley. Tickets, $10, available at internationalagricenter.com/harvestfestival.

Oct. 25 - Three Rivers Halloween Carnival – 4-8pm
Winding down the Three Rivers Raven Festival, a Halloween Carnival will be held at Three Rivers Union School. For information, call 561-4466.

Oct. 25 - Elks Lodge Red Ribbon Carnival - 11am-2pm
The Visalia Elks Lodge #1298 will host a free carnival at 3100 W. Main Street. For information, call 471-8684.

Oct. 25 – 5th Annual Red Ribbon Week Celebration – 12-4pm
Tulare County Office of Education, Tule River Tribe and Tulare County Health & Human Services Agency will feature a keynote speaker, resource booths, children's corner, free food and entertainment at the International Agri-Center in Tulare. For information, call 651-0155.

Oct. 26 – Red Ribbon Celebration – 8am-1pm
The Lemoore Police Department and Parks and Recreation will sponsor an evening of music, live entertainment, free food, competitions, prizes and giveaways at Lion's Park.

Oct. 27 - 24th Annual Taste Treats in Tulare – 6-8:30pm
The Tulare Historical Museum will hold its annual fundraiser at the Agri-Center, 4500 S. Laspina St., Tulare. Local food and beverage sampling and live and silent auctions will be featured. Tickets, $50, are available at tularehistoricalmuseum.org.

Oct. 28 – TCOE Awards Breakfast – 7:30am
Tulare County Office of Education will honor its Countywide Excellence in Education Award recipients at a breakfast at Visalia Convention Center. For information, call 733-6302.

Oct. 28 – Business After Hours – 5:30-7:30pm
Potter's Porta Potties will host Visalia Chamber's Business After Hours program. For information, visit visaliachamber.org.

Oct. 30 – South Valley Nut Conference – 8am-1pm
West Coast Nut Grower Guide will host the South Valley Nut Conference at Tulare County Fairgrounds, 215 Martin Luther King Jr., Tulare. Free admission and free tri-tip lunch. For information, visit wcngg.com.

Oct. 30 – LocalMotion Awards Luncheon – 11:30am
The Tulare County Association of Governments will honor the projects, citizens, public officials and plans that have contributed to transportation planning in Tulare County. Registration is $45 (or $35 before Oct. 24). For information, visit tularecog.org.

Oct. 31 – Hanford Chamber Halloween Costume Party.
Music by DJ Mario Cruz and no host bar will be featured. Fee is $10. For information, visit hanfordchamber.com.

Nov. 1 – 75th Anniversary Celebration – 10am-10pm
In celebration of 75 years of the City of Visalia Parks and Recreation Department, a party at Plaza Park will include a car show, food, carnival, vendors, music, live entertainment, bounce house, outdoor movie and more. For information, visit liveandplayvisalia.com.

Nov. 1 – 1st Saturday in Three Rivers – 9:30am-5pm
In celebration of the Raven Festival, first Saturday will feature special events focusing on the raven. Info, visit www.1stsaturdaytr.com.

Nov. 1 – Lindsay Rib Cook-off – 12-4pm
A Rib Cook-Off will be held in downtown Lindsay to raise funds for youth clubs and youth sports. Over $3,000 in prize money and raffles will be awarded. For information, contact Bruce Watts at bwatts@lindsay.k12.ca.us.

ART

Through Oct. 31 – Images from Near and Far Artists Reception – 6-8pm
The art of Linda Hengst and Jeri Burzin will be exhibited at Main Gallery through October. For information, visit maingalleryvisalia.com.

Through Oct. 31 – Deanna Saldana Artist Exhibit
Deanna Saldana will be showcasing her artwork at Michael's Custom Jewelry, 316 W. Center St., Visalia. The exhibition will feature original works spanning 15 years including several new works. For information, visit facebook.com/DeannaSaldanaArtProductions.

Through - Nov. 1 – Tulare Historical Museum Vaults Exhibit – 10am-4pm
Tulare Historical Museum artwork from its vintage art collection will be on display at Heritage Art Gallery, 444 W. Tulare Ave., Tulare. The exhibit is open Thursday through Saturday. For information, visit tularehistoricalmuseum.org.

Oct. 18 – Emotions & Color Workshop – 10am-12pm
The Creative relationship between emotion and color will be explored at the Arts Consortium, My Voice Media Center, 400 N. Church St., Visalia. Donations of $5 accepted. To register, call 303-0394.

Oct. 18 – #Insiders – 1-5pm
The Kings Art Center will open its #Insiders exhibit with a reception at the Kings Art Center, 605 N. Douty, Hanford. The exhibit is a group show of California-based artists whose work portrays contemporary graffiti, street and public art. Live demonstrations are featured. The exhibit runs through November 22. For information, visit kingsartcenter.org.

Oct. 19 – Tulare Historical Museum Open for Free – 12:30-4pm
Admission to the Tulare Historical Museum and Art Gallery will be at no cost. For information, visit tularehistoricalmuseum.org.

Oct. 20 – Ellen Milinich Artist Lecture – 1pm
Ellen Milinich, whose works on are on exhibit at the Porterville College Art Gallery, will give a lecture in Room FA-103 in Room FA-103 of the PC Fine Arts Building. For information, call 791-2257.

Oct. 22 – Crafty Corner: Knit and Crochet Group – 10:30am-12pm
Learn and practice fiber arts on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at Visalia Branch Library. For information, call 713-2703.

Oct. 22 – Graffiti/Street Art Exhibit Reception – 5:30-7:30pm
A reception for Graffiti Street Art Exhibit will be held at the Marcellus Gallery in the Kings Art Center. The exhibit will run through Nov. 23. For information, visit kingsartcenter.org.

Oct. 25 – 35th Annual Show & Sale – 10am-3pm
Handweavers of the Valley will host Harvest of Handwovens at Exeter Veterans Memorial Building, 324 N. Kaweah Ave. Admission is free. Holiday gifts, rugs and demonstrations will be featured. For information, visit hwotv.org.

Oct. 25 – Harvest Splendor Boutique & Luncheon – 10am-2pm
The Lutheran Women's Missionary League of Grace Lutheran Church in Visalia will have an assortment of handmade decorations and holiday gift items, as well as a bakery. Lunch will be served at 11:30am. Tickets are $8; $3 for children 10 and under and sold following church services. Reservations can also be made by calling 623-9588 or 901-8515.

Oct. 31-Nov. 2 – Central California Quilt & Sew Retreat
Thimble Towne presents three days of sewing at the Visalia Convention Center. Freebies and giveaways, a truck show on Nov. 2, breakfast, lunch and snacks included. To register, visit Thimble Towne at 400 W. Caldwell Ave., Suite F, in Visalia.

Nov. 1 – 1st Saturday – 11am-5pm
Artists of Three Rivers have joined together to create a day of food, fun and art on the first Saturday of every month featuring artists, restaurants, gift shops, galleries and more. Watch the artist paint or listen to musicians or storytellers. Info, visit 1stsaturdaytr.com.

Nov. 1-30 – Hidden in the Leaves – 10am-6pm
Arts Alliance of Three Rivers will host its autumn exhibition at Sierra Subs & Salads Dining area. For information, visit facebook.com/artsallianceofthreerivers.

Nov. 6-Jan. 3 – Paintings by Nadi Spencer
Paintings by Nadi Spencer opens November 5 in the Tulare Historical Museum and Gallery and runs through January 3. A reception for the Three-Rivers resident will be held at the Heritage Art Gallery Nov. 6 from 5-7pm. For information, visit tularehistoricalmuseum.org.

Nov. 7 – Porterville Art Walk – 5-8pm
A free self-guided tour of local artisans, galleries, art studios, museums and alternative art venues is featured. For information, visit portervilleartwalk.org.

Nov. 7 – Downtown Visalia's First Friday – 5:30-8:30pm
On the first Friday of each month, artists and businesses throughout Downtown Visalia come together to celebrate and share their art. For information, visit theartsconsortium.org.

Nov. 7 – Hidden in the Leaves Artist Reception – 5:30-8pm
Local artists will celebrate the autumn in Three Rivers with an exhibit that will run Nov. 1 to Nov. 30 at Arts Alliance of Three Rivers, 41717 Sierra Dr. An artist reception will be held Nov. 7. The event is sponsored by the Arts Alliance of Three Rivers and Sierra Subs and Salads.

Nov. 14-16 – Open Air Peddler's Market
The market featuring antiques and collectibles is held at Tumbleweeds Antiques, 159 North B Street, Exeter, and at Exeter Treasures, 558 E. Palm. To reserve space or for information, call 592-1940 or 936-1487.

COMMUNITY

Oct. 16-23 – AAUW Book Sale
The American Association of University Women Visalia-Sequoia Branch will hold a book sale at the Sequoia Mall during mall hours. The mall is open 10am-8:30pm Monday through Friday; 10am-7pm Saturday; and 11am-6pm Sunday. Proceeds go to local scholarships.

Oct. 17 – New Life Tabernacle Shredded Beef Lunch – 10:30am-2pm
New Life Tabernacle in Corcoran will be selling Shredded Beef lunch plates to raise money for its Building Fund Project. For information, call 992-3290.

Oct. 17 & Nov. 21 – Palette Club Meeting – 7pm
The Tulare Palette Club will meet at the Tulare Museum's Heritage Art Gallery. For information, visit tularehistoricalmuseum.org.

Oct. 17 – C.H.A.P. Talk Dives into Lost Civilizations – 7-8pm
Porterville College's Cultural Historical Awareness Program (C.H.A.P.) fall schedule continues with "Between Atlantis and the Indus Valley: People, the Environment, and the Archaeology of Lost Civilizations" with PC Anthropology Professor, Dr. Robert Simpkins. Porterville College is located at 100 E. College Ave. For information visit www.portervillecollege.edu.

Oct. 18 – 3rd Annual Harvest Soup Cook-off – 1:30pm
A fundraiser to benefit Ecos Soup Kitchen will be held at the Episcopal Church of the Savior, 519 N. Douty St. in Hanford. In addition to the cook-off and beer and wine garden, tours of the Soup Kitchen and Historic Church and Chapel will be available. For cook-off registration/information, call 212-4657.

Oct. 18 – Raider Nation Blood Drive – 9am-4pm
The Visalia Donor Center will have a blood drive bus available at 1515 S. Mooney Blvd. For information, email lgeuvjehizian@donateblood.org.

Oct. 18 - Stephen Ministry Introductory Workshop – 9am-1pm
Four Visalia churches are combining to host a half-day Stephen Ministry Introductory Workshop for congregations committed to lay ministry and caring ministry at Visalia United Methodist Church at 5200 W. Caldwell. Cost is $15 or $50 for a group of 4. To register, visit stephenministry.org/workshop.

Oct. 18 – PFLAG Meeting – 3-5pm
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays Tulare & Kings County will discuss mental health at its monthly meeting. PFLAG meets on the third Sunday each month at the Educational and Cultural Center, Congregation B'nai David, 1039 S. Chinowth, Visalia. For information, visit www.pflag-tulare-kings.org.

Oct. 18 – Critter Creek – 6pm
Meet a raven, a crow and a vulture and learn about Critter Creek Rescue Organization. This event is part of the month-long celebration of the Three Rivers Raven Festival.

Oct. 18 – 39th Anniversary Celebration Dance – 6:30pm
Visalia Smooth Dancers will have ballroom dancing and dinner at Exeter Memorial Building, 3424 N. Kaweah Ave. Tickets are $35. For information, call 799-9212.

Oct. 18 – A&W Cruise Night – 8-9pm
Every third Saturday each month, it's A&W Cruise Night featuring vintage cars. For information, call 625-1513.

Oct. 19 – St. Mary Armenian Church of Yettem's Shish Kebab Luncheon – 1-3pm
Fundraiser at Visalia's Elks Lodge, 3100 W. Main St. Cost is $20.

Oct. 19 – Family Builders Foster Care, Inc. Golf Tournament – 1pm
Four-player teams may sign up and tee off at 2pm at Exeter Golf Course. Cost is $35 for 9 holes and tri-tip dinner. For information, call 685-1200.

Oct. 21 – Young Lives Club - 6:30 - 8pm
The Young Lives Club, a support group for teen moms and dads, meets on the first and third Tuesdays each month at Woodlake Presbyterian, 600 W. Narajo. Intergenerational games: cards, board games, dominoes and more are featured. For information, call 584-8460.

Oct. 21 – Bikers United for Kids Ride Registration Deadline – 9:30am
The deadline to register for the 26th Annual Bikers United Motorcycle Run is Oct. 21. The organization's raises funds for less fortunate kids. For information, visit gforkids.com.

Oct. 21 – Guide to Beginning Genealogy – noon
A program on genealogy will be held at the Tulare County Library, Visalia Branch, 200 W. Oak Ave. For information, visit tularecountylibrary.org/visaliabranch.html.

Oct. 22, 29 – Medicare Extra Help – 1-4pm
Every Wednesday, Tulare Senior Center offers free counseling for Medicare beneficiaries. Help with prescription plans, claims, appeals and general information. This program is sponsored by Kings/Tulare AAA HICAP. Appointments available by calling 623-0199.

Oct. 23- Career Choices: Module One – 1-2pm
The Porterville College Job, Entrepreneur, and Career (J.E.C.) Center will hold a free workshop in SM102 (Forum) with C.T.E. Program Manager, Irene Ortega. Learn to develop your attitude and aptitude to promote college and career readiness. To RSVP call 791-2216. For information, visit www.portervillecollege.edu.

October 23 & 25– Veterans Aid and Attendance Benefits Workshop
Gil Fleming, VA Accredited Attorney, will be the guest speaker 6pm on Oct. 23 at Quail Park, 4520 W. Cypress Ave., Visalia. Wartime veterans or surviving spouses may be eligible for some tax free benefits to help pay for home health care, assisted living, or nursing home expenses. Another session will also be held on Oct. 25 at 10-11:30am. For information, call 624-3503.

Oct. 23 – Native American Folklore – 6:30pm
Jennifer Malone and Marie Wilcox will speak at the Three Rivers Library as part of the month-long celebration of the Three Rivers Raven Festival.

Oct 23 – Oakland Raiders Boosters Meeting – 7pm
Tulare Kings Counties Oakland Raiders Boosters meet on the second and fourth Thursdays each month at Elks Lodge, 3100 W. Main St., Visalia.

Oct. 24 – Monrovia Nursery Blood Drive – 8am-1pm
Central Valley Blood Center will accept donations at 32643 Road 196 in Woodlake. For information, contact Darla Silvera at dsilvera@donateblood.org.

Oct. 24 – Salsa Dance featuring Rumba 32 – 9-11pm
Local educators and professionals in the Visalia and Fresno area gather at 210 Cafe to dance to Latin jazz or salsa music. For information, call 739-9009.

Oct. 24-25 – 11th Hour Paranormal Society Weekend
Equipment and procedures of paranormal investigations will be showcased at the Hanford Carnegie Museum, 108 E. 8th St.

Oct. 25 – Make a Difference Day – 8:30am
The City of Visalia Parks & Urban Forestry Divisions invites individuals, families and community groups to join more than 200 volunteers for a grassroots effort to work on projects in the community. Register by calling 713-4384 or emailing chipin@ci.visalia.ca.us.

Oct. 25 – Military Appreciation Day 9am-2pm
Brandman University in Visalia will host a military appreciation day with services, employment opportunities and activities for active duty personnel and veterans. The free event will take place on Brandman University's Visalia campus at 649 S. County Center Dr. Vendors or employers wanting to get involved can register by contacting Marie Labbee at mlabbee@brandman.edu or 636-5585.

Oct. 25 Harvest Splendor Boutique & Luncheon – 10am-2pm
The Lutheran Women's Missionary League of Grace Lutheran Church will offer an assortment of handmade decorations and gift items as well as cakes, pies, cookies, breads, jams and candy. Lunch will be served at 11:30am. Tickets are $8 for adults, $3 for children ages 10 and younger. Tickets may be purchased after church services or reservations can be made by calling 623-9588 or 901-8615. Grace Lutheran Church is located at 1111 S. Conyer St., Visalia.

Oct. 25 & Nov. 1 – Women's Self Defense 10:45am & 12:15pm
Learn techniques to stop a determined attacker in this self defense course offered on three days, Oct. 25, Nov. 1 and 8 at 137 N. E St., Exeter. For information, call 802-8202.

Oct. 25 – Annual Bunko Party and Salad Luncheon – 11am
Kaweah Delta Hospital Guild will present a social hour and luncheon at Kaweah Delta Medical Center, 400 W. Mineral King, Blue Room. All profits from the event will go toward Patient Care Equipment for Kaweah Delta Health Care District. Cost is $12 paid in advance. For reservations, call 734-3109.

Oct. 25 – The Vitamin Shoppe Blood Drive – 11am-2pm

Central Valley Blood Center will accept donations at 4009 S. Mooney Blvd, Visalia. Donors receive area coupons and other rewards. Info, contact Darla Silvera at dsilvera@donateblood.org.

Oct.25 – Girl Scouts Red Ribbon Carnival – 11am-2pm

Girl Scouts Central California South will be hold a citywide recruitment for Leaders and girls at the ELKS annual Red Ribbon Carnival. This free event will be held at Visalia Lodge 1298, 3100 W. Main St., Visalia. For information, call 471-8684.

Oct. 25 – Sci/Fi Book Club – 1pm

Tulare Public Library Sci/Fi Book Club meets on the last Saturday each month. For information, visit tularepubliclibrary.org.

THEATER

Through Oct. 18 – 37 Postcards
Encore Theatre presents "37 Postcards," about a man who returns home after years of traveling abroad to find nothing is the way he remembers it. The show runs Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30pm, and Sundays at 2pm. For information, visit tulareencoretheatre.org.

Oct. 16, 17, 18, 19, 24 & 25 – A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum – 7:30pm
Lindsay Community Theater presents its fall musical. The theater is located at 190 N. Elmwood. Tickets, $15 for adults and $10 for students, are available at visit lindsaycommunitytheater.com.

Oct. 25 – Respect: A Musical Journey of Women – 7:30pm
Visalia Community Players presents "Respect: A Musical Journey of Women" at Visalia Fox Theatre, 300 Main St. For information, visit foxvisalia.org.

Oct. 26 – Short Film Premier
Remscape presents the premier of "Fovos: Fear Wants to Play," a film by Joshua Cordero, starring Ashley Olson, Stephen Corl, Charles Williams at the Hanford Civic Auditorium. Tickets $2. Due to disturbing elements and scary images, parental discretion is advised. For information, visit fovos.remscape.com.

Oct. 26 – An Evening with C.S. Lewis – 2:30pm
Described by critics as "extraordinary, a must see, a master class," "An Evening with CS Lewis" will be held at the Visalia Fox Theatre. Tickets, $15-$39.95. For information, visit FoxVisalia.org.

Nov. 10 – Movie Night at the Barn – 6pm
"How to Train Your Dragon 2" will be featured at McKellar Family Farms, 32985 Road 164, Ivanhoe. Bring blankets or lawn chairs. Admission is free. For information, visit mckellarfamilyfarms.com.

Nov. 14-30 – Side by Side
Visalia Players Theater Company presents this tribute to composer-lyricist Stephen Sondheim at the Ice House Theater, 410 E Race Ave, Visalia. Three matinee showings will be held at 2pm Nov. 16, 23, 30. Regular showings will be held Nov. 14, 15, 21, 22, 28 & 29 at 7:30pm. For tickets and information, visit visaliaplayers.org.

Dec. 4-14 – Pedro, the Angel of Olivera Street
The Enchanted Playhouse presents the story of Pedro, a young boy with the voice of an angel who wishes to restore traditional Christmas celebrations. The play will be held on Friday and Saturday at 7pm, and Sunday at 2pm at Main Street Theatre, 307 E. Main, Visalia. Tickets are $8 and $5 for matinees. For information, visit enchantedplayhouse.org.

Ken Davis

Author Ken Davis to Speak at Visalia Fox Theatre

Best-selling author, frequent radio and television guest, and one of the country's most sought after inspirational and motivational speakers, Ken Davis will take the stage of the Visalia Fox Theatre for a 7pm show on Monday, November 3.

Davis' mixture of humor and inspiration has delighted and enriched audiences of all ages. His books have received national critical acclaim, including the "Book of the Year" award and the Gold Medallion Award. The video and audiotapes of his live appearances are in constant demand.

Davis has been the keynote speaker for hundreds of major corporate events. He is a featured speaker for Promise Keepers and a frequent guest on "Focus on the Family." He has made thousands of personal appearances around the world.

As president of Dynamic Communications International, Davis teaches speaking skills to ministry professionals and corporate executives. His daily radio show, "Lighten Up!" is heard on over 1,500 stations in the United States and around the world.

Tickets are $20 and $25. For more information, visit www.foxvisalia.org.

Visalia Fox Presents 'An Evening with C.S. Lewis' on October 26

The year is 1963 and C.S. Lewis, the famous British author, is hosting a group of American writers at his home near Oxford. They are about to experience a captivating evening with a man whose engaging conversation and spontaneous humor made him one of the great raconteurs of his day.

David Payne as C.S. Lewis

Seated in his living room and in front of a warm fire, he recalls the people and events that inspired his thought and shaped his life; of his friendship with J.R.R. Tolkien; why he nearly abandoned *The Chronicles of Narnia*; how he came to embrace Christianity; and of the American woman who turned his life upside-down.

"An Evening with C.S. Lewis" comes to the Visalia Fox Theatre for a 2:30pm show on Sunday, October 26. Described by critics as "extraordinary," the performance shows the continuing impact of a man who died over 50 years ago and whose collected works made him one of the literary giants of the 20th century.

Tickets are $15 to $39.95. For tickets or more information, visit www.foxvisalia.org.

NEXT DEADLINE:
30 OCTOBER, 2014

Historical Museum Hosts Taste Treats in Tulare

The Tulare Historical Museum will offer an opportunity to sample the best foods and beverages in the Valley when it hosts Taste Treats in Tulare at the Heritage Complex International Agri-Center, 4500 S. Laspina St., Tulare, from 6-8:30pm on Monday, October 27.

The 24th annual event, which also features live and silent auctions, is the museum's biggest fundraiser of the year. Tickets are $50 and include all beverages.

For tickets or more information about this or other museum events, call 686-2074 or visit www.tularehistoricalmuseum.org.

Main Street Hanford Presents 'Witches Night Out'

Main Street Hanford will present "Witches Night Out," a "spellbinding" ladies night out on Friday, October 17 from 6-9pm in downtown Hanford. This ladies shopping night will include 20 businesses extending their hours and inviting everyone to get in the "spirit" of the Halloween season.

Event tickets are $10 and can be purchased at the Main Street Hanford office, Pro-Travel Hanford, Castaways Concepts, Fatte Albert's Pizza Company, Hanford Antique Emporium, Lush Fine Wines, and Candice and Company in downtown Hanford.

Tickets will be redeemed on the night of the event in front of the Old Courthouse on 8th Street. Ticket holders will receive a complimentary glass of wine or spiced cider and a goody bag. Those visiting eight participating businesses will have a chance to win a $200 travel gift certificate, two wine & chocolate tasting tickets, gift certificates from Fatte Albert's Pizza Company, Hanford Antique Emporium, The Smoke Joint and more.

Sponsored by Main Street Hanford and *The Sentinel*, the event is limited to 750 people. For more information, call Main Street Hanford at 582-9457.

Local Kids Carefully Select Halloween Alter Egos

Nancy Vigran

Standing in front of a large selection of Halloween costumes, 10-year-old Nate Porterfield was leaning away from dressing as a Star Wars character this year. The Star Wars series is his favorite. Last year, he dressed as Darth Maul.

"I just think it is time I grew up into something more for my age," he said.

His younger brother, Owen, who is six years old, will be dressing as The Flash, their father, Erik Porterfield, said. Last year, Owen was the Wolverine.

Looking at the Phantom of Darkness and the Rabid Werewolf, another costume caught his eye, Jango Fett. Maybe he will reconsider.

It has been that way with boys this year, said Yang Xiong, manager of Party City in Visalia. There is no specific character that they all want to dress as, although the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles are pretty popular, he added.

The girls, however, "all want to be Elsa from Frozen," Xiong said.

Halloween is the biggest shopping season for the store, said Xiong, who has worked with the franchise for 12 years. People shop for their costumes, accessories and to decorate their house and yard, he said.

"Our customers come back every year, to see what is new," he said.

Halloween costumes are big business. They usually range from $15 to $40, but can cost a lot more. Many adults choose to design and accessorize their own costume to be unique, but this can be expensive. A spooky mask, Dorothy's ruby slippers and witch's hat are all available.

The employees have a lot of fun this time of year, too. During the weekends, they dress up, and closer to the holiday, they are almost always in costume.

"Halloween is the one time of year, we get to be someone else," Xiong said.

Halloween is big business. Some specialty stores, such as Spooky Halloween Superstore and Spirit of Halloween, open year after year in Visalia, Hanford and Porterville just for the months of September and October. And, there is a Facebook page aimed at Tulare County Halloween enthusiasts, which has more than 2,500 members.

During the Fall Festival pumpkin-carving contest last week, some girls challenged Xiong's comment that all girls want to be Elsa. Eight-year-old Reese Bryant plans to dress up as an American Indian this year. She found a really pretty costume, she said.

Seven-year-old Morgan Smith is dressing up as a penguin, she said. Her brother, Seth, who is 5 years old, wants to be a superhero, and their younger brother, four-year-old Tommy, will be a lion.

As for Nate Porterfield, his school friends and neighbors will have to wait until the goblins come out on Halloween to see what he decides.

'The Drawings of Ellen Milinich' on Display at Porterville College

The public is invited to see an exhibition of "The Drawings of Ellen Milinich" through October 23 in the Porterville College Art Gallery. The public is also invited to an artist lecture from noon to 1pm on Monday, October 20, in Room FA-103 of the PC Fine Arts Building.

'Portrait of Kristina'

Ellen Milinich, whose brilliant use of light, composition and expression in her rendered charcoal portraits, demonstrating a spiritual essence, was a late bloomer in her art career.

"Although I would periodically draw portraits, it wasn't until my children were grown that I had an 'a-ha' moment and realized my talent was God-given, and that it was my purpose to pursue, strengthen and develop this talent," Milinich said.

Milinich has won numerous top awards with local venues and organizations such as Arts Visalia and Visalia Arts League. Her drawings are published in magazines such as *International Artist Magazine* and *American Artist Drawing Magazine*. Her artwork is also published in two books, *Strokes of Genius—Best of Drawing: Fresh Perspectives* and *Art Journey: People.*

"Most of my artistic skills I attribute to being inherently created at birth," Milinich said. "In addition, I spent my childhood surrounded by art books and magazines, paint brushes, paints and creative people."

Milinich now lives in Visalia, but she grew up in Monterey, where her father taught art at the local community college and created "Little Man on Campus" cartoons.

Gallery hours are Monday through Thursday from noon to 2pm and 4-6pm.

The Porterville College Art Gallery is located on campus at 100 E. College Ave. in Porterville. For more information, call Jim Entz at 791-2257.

Some Halloween Haunts

Pirates for Hope – Venture aboard a life-size pirate ship and visit with pirates. Open dawn to 10pm, October 17-18, October 24-25, and October 31-November 1, at 3506 W. Pryor, Visalia. Admission – Non-perishable or canned food and/or an unwrapped new toy benefiting Visalia Emergency Aid and Tulare County Child Welfare Services Foster Care Program.

Vossler Farms Corn Maze and Haunted Trail – Corn maze open Wednesdays through Fridays at 5pm and Saturdays and Sundays, at noon. Haunted Trail open Friday through Sunday, October 17-19 and October 24-26, and Wednesday, October 29 through Friday, October 31 at 7pm, at 26773 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia. Corn maze admission - $9/adult; $7/children; $5/seniors & military; children 4 and under free. Haunted Trail admission - $9/12+ years; $7/11 and under.

Zombie Bash at Roller Town, Thursday, October 30 from 6-9:30pm, at 520 S. Linwood, Visalia. Admission - $4.

The Visalia Players at the Ice House Theatre,
in collaboration with Family Services,
present a special reprise "Fun-Raiser" Performance of

WRITTEN BY: Dorothy Marcic
DIRECTED BY: Leeni Mitchell

Produced by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc. New York City

One Night Only
Saturday, October 25, 2014

at the Fox Theatre, 300 W. Main, Visalia, California

Tickets now on sale!

Reserved Orchestra Tickets: $25
VIP Tickets: $60 - includes VIP seating and eats and drinks at Tazzaria
Dinner Tickets: $100 - includes VIP Seating and dinner and wine at Cafe 225